

The Musical World

AND

Dramatic Observer.

ESTABLISHED 1836.

VOL. 70.—No. 12.

SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 1890.

WEEKLY, PRICE 3d.

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NEXT COLLEGE CONCERT will take place in MAY.
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CHARLES MORLEY, Hon. Sec.

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By order of the Academic Board,
Mandeville-place, Manchester-square, W. SHELLEY FISHER, Secretary.

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PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SESSION, 1890.
April 14 ... Annual Dinner at 7 p.m.
May 6 ... A Lecture will be given by Dr. C. W. Pearce.
" 13 ... Mr. J. Percy Baker will read a Paper on "The Study of Musical Form."
June 3 ... A Lecture will be delivered by Mr. H. Somers Clarke.
July 1 ... Lecture at 8 p.m.
" 15 ... F.C.O. Examination (Paper Work) at 10 a.m.
" 16 ... F.C.O. Examination (Organ Playing) at 10 a.m.
" 17 ... F.C.O. Examination (Organ Playing) at 10 a.m.
" 18 ... Distribution of Diplomas at 11 a.m.
" 22 ... A.C.O. Examination (Paper Work) at 10 a.m.
" 23 ... A.C.O. Examination (Organ Playing) at 10 a.m.
" 24 ... A.C.O. Examination (Organ Playing) at 10 a.m.
" 25 ... Diploma Distribution at 11 a.m.
" 31 ... Annual General Meeting at 8 p.m.
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CRYSTAL PALACE.—Sir Charles Halle will play, and Miss Liza Lehmann will sing at the SATURDAY CONCERTS, MARCH 22nd, at 3.0. Conductor, Mr. AUGUST MANNS. The programme will include concert overture "Im Frühling" (Goldmark), concerto for pianoforte and orchestra, No. 3, in C minor (Beethoven), solos for pianoforte (a) "Imprompti" (Schubert), (b) Spinning Song, (Mendelssohn), symphony in C "Luz" (Mozart), and ballad for orchestra "La Belle Dame sans Merci" (Mackenzie). Numbered seats, 2s. 6d.; unnumbered, 1s.

MISS AGNES ZIMMERMANN'S PIANOFORTE RECITAL, at PRINCES' HALL, TUESDAY AFTERNOON, March 25th, at 3.30. Beethoven's Sonata in C, op. 2; Chopin's Sonata, op. 35 (with funeral march); and pieces by Fr. E. Bach, J. S. Bach, Leonardo Leo, Rameau, Rubinstein, Schütt, Hans Seeling, and Liszt. Tickets, 7s., 5s., and 1s., of Chappell and Co., 50, New Bond-street, and at Princes' Hall.

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For Prospectus and Form of Application for Membership, address the Secretary.
On MONDAY, the 14th April, at 8.15 p.m., a paper will be read by Mr. G. F. HUNTLEY, Mus. B. (Cantab), F.C.O., &c., "On the Due Limits of General Musical Influences upon the Special Work of the Organist."
The ANNUAL DINNER will take place on the 21st April. Full particulars shortly.
The date of the Next Examination for F.G.O. is fixed for the 29th and 30th July.
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SPECIAL NOTICES.

* * All advertisements for the current week's issue should be lodged with the Printer not later than noon Thursday.

* * MSS. and Letters intended for publication must be addressed to THE EDITOR. Rejected MSS. cannot be returned unless accompanied by stamped directed envelope.

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(Payable in advance.)

The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 1890.

FACTS AND COMMENTS.

It appears from the prospectus which has been issued, that the Carl Rosa Opera Company will inaugurate their season at Drury Lane on April 5th, when will be given the first of a series of thirty-six performances. Out of the large repertoire of sixty-seven operas which the company can produce on occasion the following are chosen for the London season:—Gounod's "Romeo and Juliet," Wallace's "Lurline," Balfe's "Talisman," Bizet's "Pearl-Fishers," Meyerbeer's "Star of the North," Balfe's "Rose of Castille," Thomas's "Mignon," Balfe's "Bohemian Girl," Gounod's "Faust," Wagner's "Lohengrin," Halévy's "The Jewess," Bizet's "Carmen," Donizetti's "Lucia," Benedict's "Lily of Killarney," Wallace's "Maritana," and Mr. Frederic Cowen's new Scandinavian opera, "Thorgrim." This last unattractively named work, which will naturally be the most interesting feature of the series, is cast as follows:—Thorgrim, Mr. Barton McGuckin; Harald (King of Norway), Mr. F. H. Celli; Eric, Mr. Max Eugene; Thorir, Mr. Somers; A. Skald, Mr. Wilfred Esmond; A Herald, Mr. E. Albert; Helgi, Mr. Leslie Crotty; Arnora, Mdlle. Tremelli; Nanna, Miss Kate Drew; and Olof, Miss Zélie de Lussan. The conductor will be Mr. E. Goossens, assisted by Mr. Claude Jacquinot. The scheme, it cannot be denied, is extremely attractive, and—since weightier things are at stake than the mere financial success of a single company—everyone will join in the heartiest wishes for success to the Carl Rosa Opera Company.

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JOHN BROADWOOD AND SONS, Pianoforte Makers to Her Majesty, London.

Concerning the "Peer Gynt" suite of Grieg, the Boston "Saturday Evening Gazette" delivered itself in a recent issue of some strictures upon the work, and the enthusiasm with which it was received at a Boston Symphony Concert, which may be commended to our readers' attention. After saying that the suite is pretty, but slight in construction, and, though lavish in harmony and orchestration, miserly in idea, the critic speaks thus of the last movement: "The closing number works the eight bars of which it consists to very tatters, and winds up with several cymbal clashes and orchestral noise, over which the audience went wild, applauding the clap-trap effect with such persistent enthusiasm that Mr. Nikisch found a repetition inevitable, and so granted the first encore of the season. It was a mournful comment on the taste of a symphony concert audience." It is not our office or intention to put forward any apology for Grieg's work in this connection; the question indicated relates more immediately to the value of popular appreciation and its general forms.

It seems to be forgotten by those who argue thus that, in the vast majority of cases, those who clamour for encores are but a mere handful of the audience. A frequent attendance at concert-rooms, and all places where amateurs most do congregate, will show any one that forty or fifty "rowdies"—we speak of the musical, not the social specimen of the genus—can easily overrule the more discriminating part of the audience, and make enough noise to obtain a repetition. So that it is by no means just to include all in the condemnation deserved by the few. But even if it were proved that at Boston it was the whole and not a mere section of the audience who had raved about "Peer Gynt," it would but show that in Boston, as in other places nearer home, you have only to scratch the professed worshipper of classical music to find beneath the Tartar to whom art, in its deeper sense, is non-existent, and who cares only for its confectionery. A real passion for the highest in art is by no means so easily attained as some would have us think. We are told too often of the sublimely simplicity which marks the greatest art, appealing to the common heart with directness. Yes, the art of the "Agamemnon," of the "Niké Apteros," of "Hamlet" is indeed simple when you have reached the high peaks on which such visions are to be had. But no intimate communion with them is possible to the casual passer-by, the careless, or the vulgar. So in music it is not that those who hear are devoid of the feelings to which the highest makes its appeal. Deep down in their natures these feelings may exist, but they are so buried with crushing weights of conventionality and ignorance that nothing but a violent assault will awaken them to conscious activity. And the average music lover has not as yet gone far beyond a vague notion that he goes to a concert less to fall into touch with an expression of the deepest verities of life than to hear something "charming"—"delightful, don't you know"—"so awfully sweet."

On Monday evening the Highbury Philharmonic Society, under Mr. G. H. Betjemann, will produce Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise" and "Hebrides" overture, Dr. Mackenzie's "Pibroch," and a new ballad for chorus and orchestra, "The Song of the Western Men," by Mr. Gilbert R. Betjemann. The "Pibroch" will be played by the talented conductor of this excellent society, who is, we believe, the second to essay it in London; and rumour speaks well of the new ballad.

By a slip of the pen last week we spoke of Mr. Arthur de Greef as a "Norwegian" instead of a "Belgian" pianist.

The paper on "How I became a Mus. Doc.," which was read a few days ago before the Liverpool section of the National Society of Professional Musicians by Mr. W. L. Argent, forms an amusingly satirical comment on the American custom of granting degrees *in absentia*, which is now being made the subject of a justifiable agitation by the musical profession in England. Our contemporary, the "London Figaro," recalls the story of how Mr. Argent obtained the privilege of using the doctoral degree from some American University, having sent in as his "exercise" a bogus composition which was purposely filled with ridiculous and palpable errors. Nevertheless, the degree was accorded; or, rather it would have been had Mr. Argent produced the necessary fees. This, of course, he declined to do, but revealed the whole affair in our contemporary—to the disgust of the generous dispensers of degrees.

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That even in England the bestowal of degrees is not always unattended by error is little to the point. The public attaches a great importance to the presence of the magic letters; and, especially while the profession is in its still inchoate state, it is imperative that at least such degrees as are used shall be bestowed only by qualified examiners upon qualified candidates. It is plain that the University of Trinity College, Toronto—the immediate subject of the agitation—has grossly contravened the terms of its charter. No provision appears to have been made for the instruction even of resident students in music, and, as far as England is concerned, the entire work of examination and conferment of degrees takes place in this country. It was shown by Mr. Meadows White, Q.C., a member of the deputation which waited on Lord Knutsford recently, and who spoke on the legal aspects of the question, that the charter granted did not contemplate the possibility of any action in England by the Toronto institution. As Lord Knutsford has promised to lay the matter before the law officers of the Crown, it is reasonable to hope that before long this crying abuse may be corrected.

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Eichhorn, the well-known tenor, has discovered, if not exactly a way of renewing his youth like the eagle or a lady in society, a method by which old tenors may take a new lease of musical life under somewhat altered conditions. He fell ill, and an operation in his throat was imperative. When he had recovered sufficiently to sing again it was found that his voice had changed from a tenor to a baritone. Behold the illimitable vistas thus opened up! A tenor finds his organ becoming a little worn, and losing its pristine freshness. He falls ill, his throat is operated upon—and the qualities which were intolerable in a tenor are scarcely noticeable in the new baritone. The process can be continued further still, for, as a writer has pointed out in recording this veracious anecdote, when the baritone becomes worn another operation makes him a basso profundo. But perhaps the best thing would be to operate the worn voice out of existence altogether.

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A northern contemporary recently told an amusing story illustrative of the effects of "association" in music. It was in a village chapel near Durham, and the time was morning service. A little boy had been taken thither for the first time on condition that he behaved properly. The child regarded the congregation and the minister with wide-mouthed awe, and listened curiously throughout the voluntary. But when the strains of the organ had died away he turned to his mother with a disappointed look, and cried reproachfully, "Ma, whor's the monkey?" Then the minister arose and gave out the hymn.

We gave last week a list of the Wagnerian extracts which have been added to the *répertoire* of the Richter Concerts for the forthcoming season. It may be interesting to add now that the other works which will be given for the first time at these concerts are: Bach's Triple Concerto for flute, violin, and pianoforte; a new Symphony by Dvořák; Goldmark's overture, "Im Frühling;" Rubinstein's ballet music from "Feramors;" besides the new overture by Mr. Waddington, to which reference has already been made.

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It is a significant fact, and one that speaks well for the young English School of Music, that the only work by a native musician which finds a place upon Dr. Hans Richter's prospectus should be an overture by a youthful and hitherto almost unknown composer. Mr. Sidney Waddington was one of the foundation scholars at the Royal College of Music, and early excited great hopes of future achievements. A pianoforte Concerto produced at the College some years ago induced at the time much favourable comment, and we learn that Johannes Brahms has recently expressed himself greatly delighted with it. Mr. Waddington is a native of Leicester, and though his years scarcely exceed twenty, he has written much music of a character which promises well for the credit of National Art. He was for six years a pupil of Dr. Villiers Stanford.

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In view of the conflicting statements current of late on the subjects of Mr. Eugene d'Albert's birthplace, and the real name of his father, which has been variously stated as Higgins, Wiggins, and Figgins, an article by Miss Hildegard Werner on "Charles and Eugene d'Albert," which appears in the "Monthly Chronicle of North Country Lore and Legend," is welcome. She says:—"Eugene d'Albert (or, to give his full name, Eugene François Charles d'Albert), who was born in Glasgow on Sunday, April 10, 1864, is the younger son of the late Charles Louis Napoleon d'Albert. The certificate of the birth and baptism of Eugene's father (which I have read myself) proves, beyond doubt, that Charles d'Albert was born at Nienstädten—a village near the Elbe, on the road between Hamburg and Blankenese—on February 25, 1809, and was baptized in the Roman Catholic Church there on June 20, 1810. From the same certificate we learn also that Charles d'Albert's father was a cavalry captain in the French army, and that his mother, Chretienne Sophie Henriette, née Schultz, was a native of Hamburg. I have seen, too, a peculiar kind of coin, or medal, which bears on one side the head of Louis XV. of France, and on the other a prelate blessing a man and woman. Round the edge of the coin is engraved the names of Charles d'Albert's parents, married August 16, 1805." American papers! do, please, copy.

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A medical gentleman well known in London professional circles has been telling a tale—so at least says an American journalist—of a strange instance of the therapeutic effects of music. His son Willie, aged six years, was so ill with typhoid that his physicians predicted speedy death. Carbolic acid was given with some good effect, while the doctor staid up all night at the bedside; but the boy continued in a state of coma. Finally the father, knowing that the boy was intensely fond of music, procured a nice large musical box. He asked his son if he would like to hear it play. The boy gave no response or sign of recognition, and the musical box was set agoing. It was not long before his countenance changed and his body became uneasy. After awhile he turned over on to his side. The box was put behind his back. After another tune he turned over to it, and became conscious so as to respond

to questions. "Now, see here," said the father, "this is for your own use, and shall be called Willie's music box." The boy showed signs of pleasure and wished it kept playing. The result was continued reaction; he responded to treatment and recovered. We are glad, of course, that the patient returned to health—and the musical box; but we perceive in the story elements of extreme improbability. That such an instrument should cause even a comatose patient to move uneasily is very credible—but that its strains should bring him back to life? No; had it killed him we could readily have believed it.

* *

Among interesting features in the March magazines may be mentioned "Ouida's" "A New View of Shelley," in the "North American Review," in which the thesis that "there is something fatal to genius in modern English life" is maintained with great vigour; a portrait and biography of Sir John Stainer which appears in "Church Bells" portrait gallery; and an article by Mr. Frederic Corder, "Some Personal Reminiscences of the late Ferdinand Hiller" in the "Art Review."

* *

Mr. Walter Browne announces a dramatic and musical *matinée*, which will be given in St. George's Hall on Thursday next, under the patronage of the Savage Club. The entertainment will comprise a miscellaneous "Bohemian" concert, at which a great number of popular singers and actors have promised to assist; a comedietta, "A Love Game," from Mr. Browne's pen; and an operetta, "Mates," also written by Mr. Browne, with music by Mr. Hamilton Clarke.

* *

Miss Hope Temple's annual concert will take place in the Steinway Hall on the afternoon of Friday next. The list of artists announced to assist the clever lady, includes the names of Miss Damian, Miss Lucile Hill, Miss Geraldine Ulmar, Mr. Arthur Oswald, Mr. Kellie, and Mr. Courtice Pounds. The function—to use a hideous word, *faute de mieux*—seems likely to be of much interest.

* *

Mr. Manns and Mr. Gustav Ernest are responsible for an experiment which should prove of great interest and educational value on Fridays during April, May, and June. The former will give at the Crystal Palace a cyclus of Beethoven's Symphonies—the second and fourth excepted—the weekly performance of each being preceded by a lecture on the work by Mr. Ernest.

* *

We are glad to hear that Mr. Plunket Greene has been engaged by Mr. Harris for the forthcoming season of Italian opera. Mr. Greene will sing only in two rôles. We have not heard in what form the young Irish singer's name will appear in the *affiches*—perhaps it will be "Signor Plunketto di Verde."

* *

The Euterpe Quartet will give their annual smoking concert at the Lyric Club on the evening of Friday next. Short though their existence has been, the gentlemen who compose the quartet have proved themselves so worthy of attention that there should be a full attendance on that occasion.

* *

We are requested to state that His Grace the Duke of Fife, K.T., has consented to become President of the Beckenham School of Music. The late Earl Sydney occupied the position from the establishment of the school in 1883 until his death.

BENEFIT PERFORMANCES.

The uncomfortable incidents attending the recent concert given for the benefit of Madame Arabella Goddard will be of service if they call attention to some undesirable features in this form of charity. The feeling which prompted the professional colleagues of this much-respected lady to come to her assistance is entirely creditable to their kindness of heart; but, on the other hand, though we may take exception to the somewhat ungracious terms of Mr. Davison's letter, we must respect his motives. There is far too great a tendency at the present time to drag into the light of day the private life of those whose lot it is to earn their living in public. Private life should be sacred. Nothing is more painful to sensitive persons than to have their private trials and troubles paraded before a curious public. And the artist of the concert platform or of the stage should not be less sensitive in this respect than other people. That worthy pride and self respect which make honourable persons shrink from informing even their friends of private difficulties is certainly not less strong in those who have spent a life of independent self-supporting labour than in others—merely because that labour has been carried on before the eyes of all. Rather is the contrary the case. Now no one thinks of organising public benefits for members of other professions who may have fallen into difficulties, and so of blazoning their poverty to the world. If such a thing be done no names are mentioned; and there could have been no objection to a concert on behalf of Madame Goddard if it had been arranged in this way. The sympathy and help of friends, welcome and honourable on both sides as they are, should be offered in private, and even then the greatest delicacy must be observed or self-respect may be wounded. It seems at first sight natural and appropriate enough that when a musician has encountered misfortune an appeal for help should be made through music. But the impulse, though kind, is not always in good taste, and should not be acted on until it is found to be thoroughly acceptable to those concerned. It is a form of "sending round the hat," and that among strangers; and there are too many unscrupulous persons ever ready to have the hat sent round for their benefit to make it agreeable to individuals of a nicer honour that the same thing should be done for them. In truth, an executive artist has no concern with the general public except when actually on the platform. He has something to offer which the public is willing to buy: it is a business transaction, though generally accompanied by a more than business-like degree of cordiality on both sides, and when the transaction is over the relation is closed. The general public should not be appealed to in another capacity: for, after all, the artist is well paid for what he does, and there should be no need to go a-begging. It certainly seemed strange to those who know the musical world that the family of a musician who had enjoyed so long and successful a career as Madame Goddard should be in such dire need as was represented; and now it appears that the need was not there. There is something false, something hysterical in this kind of gushing over public favourites, which cannot conduce to independence and self-respect. Not long ago, it may be remembered, some sort of an attempt was made to offer public sympathy to a very popular singer and composer on the occasion of an exceedingly painful family occurrence. The proposal was, with great good sense and good taste, declined by the gentleman in question; but that it should have been made at all showed a deplorable lack of judgment; and the additional publicity given to the circumstances by the mere proposal, though it got no further, must have been very disagreeable to him.

Certainly there are benefit performances which are not open to these objections. That recently given at Drury Lane for the relief of those thrown out of work by the closing of Her Majesty's Theatre is a specimen of an entirely admirable kind of benefit. The distress was real and urgent, the charity collective, and so no names were mentioned and no feelings wounded. Then there are a number of concerts given annually in the season for the benefit of certain less-known artists. But this is an understood affair, and really takes place among friends. It is simply a way of repaying a musician for many services rendered *en ami* within a particular social circle. The gentleman or lady frequents certain houses, and kindly assists the hostess to entertain her guests, and such hostesses return the favour by selling tickets for the benefit concert among her friends. The late Signor Campana used to make as much as £300 by an annual benefit concert of this kind. And there is another kind of benefit performance in which a direct appeal to the great public might be made—with propriety indeed—on behalf of an individual. It cannot often be

done, because such individuals are rare. We refer to the great creative geniuses who enrich mankind by immortal works that are among the glories of human achievement. To such men the world at large owes a perpetual debt which no money can pay, and yet many such men have lived and died in grinding poverty, when a few pounds might have saved them. Composers are seldom or never so well paid as executive artists: but who thinks of organising benefits for them? The case of Beethoven and the Philharmonic Society was an honourable exception. But there may be such men among us now—a Mozart, a Schubert or a Wagner, crushed by material difficulty. No one takes the trouble to inquire, and the struggling may struggle for all we care. But we are ever ready to come to the assistance of those who are successful, who have earned fame and money, and who ought therefore not to need assistance. In fact, the ground upon which the public is appealed to in these cases is the very ground which should negative such an appeal, namely, that the individual in question is a highly successful popular favourite. Without casting personal reflections upon any individual case it may be urged as a matter of principle that the dignity of the profession would be better consulted by the observation of greater reticence and self-respect, and that public charity should be kept for public benefactors who really need it and have no friends able to help them.

THE WORSHIP OF HANDEL.

An instructive correspondence has recently been in progress in our contemporary, the "Musical Herald," concerning the influence of Handel-worship on English art. The text was a speech by Sir John Stainer, from which we reprint the more important passages, together with some extracts from various letters written by the authorities whose judgment the editor of that journal solicited. Amongst those who have expressed an opinion on the point is Dr. Spark, of Leeds, who asserted that in the North of England Handel's music had "proved of infinite educational value in checking any desire for the frivolous on the one hand and æstheticism and mad-Wagnerism on the other." With that generosity which recognises genius even in another, Dr. Spark adds, "God bless Handel, I say!" By all means; but the point is not whether Handel is worthy of Dr. Spark's invoked blessings. No one—certainly not Sir John Stainer—would wish to deny Handel's greatness. The question is rather whether the excessive worship of his music, and the introduction of his style to England at a critical moment have not tended to narrow the public taste, and to hinder the free development of English composers. That Handel's music was so remarkably "English" in spirit, and that the subjects of his oratorios were so singularly in harmony with our un-mystic tastes, are, of course, the chief reasons for his instant and continued popularity with us. Bach, the great contemporary of Handel, whose subtlety was much greater, while his *harmonic* instincts were a century in advance of the Saxon, has won appreciation here only within recent years. The objective and dramatic style of Handel stood a much better chance of recognition with the English mind than did that of the reflective, subjective Bach. It is fair to ask, then, if Handel were not a necessity in the English artistic order: and whether, therefore, things would not have been in a very similar condition had Purcell lived and Handel died. However this may be, it is obvious that exclusive admiration given to the style of any one man must result in the discouragement of others who are not content to be slavish imitators; and that this ill-effect has followed the popular love of Handel—above all of one work of Handel—is scarcely to be denied. How completely the general "common-sense" atmosphere which pervades his work has operated on the English mind to the large exclusion of more spiritual music cannot easily be reckoned; but, as has been pointed out by Dr. Turpin in our contemporary, the "Musical Standard," it is hardly Handel's fault if his sacred works have become mere stock pieces to those who dare to have no original views of their own, and can only appreciate music commended to them by association and popularity.

We give first the portion of Sir John Stainer's speech which has been the bone of contention, followed by extracts from the letters of Mr. J. A. Fuller Maitland, Mr. Ebenezer Prout, and Sir Robert Stewart. Sir John said:—

"But it will not be an easy task to dissipate that suspicion and doubt as to our own powers, and that entire loss of self-confidence which was hung like a dark cloud over English music and musicians from the middle of last

century until now. This frame of mind, so destructive of art because so discouraging to artists, was not brought about so much by an alien royal race as by the importation of a race of alien musicians, who gradually usurped the throne of music in this country. The Italian Opera, rightly welcomed at first as a genuine form of high art, steadily absorbed the whole interest of our educated classes and patrons of art. Within the last thirty years the highest proof of musical knowledge was supposed to be the discussion of the relative merits of Italian operas and Italian singers, and sufficient patronage was thought to have been bestowed on the art if a man's name appeared on the door of a box in the opera-house. A late writer (Dr. Hueffer) says on this subject: 'The premature death of Purcell and the advent of Handel were equally conducive to crushing the singularly rich development of early English music.' Although I quite believe that the excessive worship of Handel has had a most injurious effect on English music, I think it hardly fair to blame Handel himself with it. He could not possibly have foreseen that Italian Opera, after going through a grand epoch of development, and after reaching a lofty standard, should eventually pass into a weak and imbecile state; its dialogue meaninglessly attached to most conventional forms of recitative; its songs either simple melodies brought into prominence by the practical suppression of the higher functions of the orchestra or so constructed as to be a sort of tight rope for vocal gymnastics. Happily we have succeeded in throwing off this yoke, and our gratitude for an escape from such a thralldom is largely due to the persistent attacks made on Italian Opera by the modern German school, Wagner and his followers."

MR. JOSEPH BARNEY.

"In cold blood I feel sure that Sir John would be one of the first to admit that, from the time when Handel was in the flesh to the present moment, there is scarcely a composer—if there be one at all—who can be said to have exercised so beneficial an influence upon music in England. If we want to recognise this fact in its entirety we have only to throw our minds back a hundred and fifty years, and see what was the state of music at that time. The compositions of Tallis, Tye, Byrde, Gibbons, Blow, Humphreys, Purcell, Croft, and Greene were being regularly performed in our cathedrals, and the madrigals and ballets of the same composers were sung in the private houses of the great. These, with a little harpsichord music and the operas of Purcell, were nearly all that existed when Handel came on the scene, and there cannot be a doubt that the production of such works as "Acis and Galatea," "Israel in Egypt," "Jephtha," "Solomon," and "Messiah" soon broadened and deepened the roots of music. That the works of his great rival, Bach, did not make much way in England is scarcely to be wondered at, as until their resuscitation by Mendelssohn they can scarcely be said to have made much way in the country in which they were written. But, apart from that, it does not appear that Handel's works had the effect of keeping out the oratorios of Haydn, or the masses of Beethoven and Mozart; nor has the popularity of the oratorios and large psalms of Mendelssohn suffered from the excessive worship of Handel. Indeed, the more this question is looked into the more it would seem that the word "excessive" is misapplied in condemnation of the Handel cult."

MR. J. A. FULLER MAITLAND.

"If musical history presented us with the phenomenon of one overpowering genius unapproached in grandeur of conception or fulfilment by any of his predecessors, contemporaries, or followers, no admiration bestowed upon the great body of his work could be considered excessive, nor could any complaint be made against the neglect into which all other men's works would fall. This, happily, is not the case; at all events, such a position of supremacy cannot be claimed for Handel even by his blind admirers. Again, it is notorious that the popular adulation is not bestowed upon the great body of his work, or even upon the whole of that part of it which critics of all schools agree in regarding as his best; but upon a very few productions that cannot be held to represent more than one side of his genius, that side, namely, which enabled him to give the simplest possible expression to the most obvious religious feelings and utterances. Since a larger proportion of these productions are contained in the "Messiah" than in any other work, that is the composition which has received the most indiscriminate admiration, not on account of the grandeur and unity of its structure as a whole, but because it contains 'Comfort ye,' 'He shall feed His flock,' 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' and the 'Hallelujah Chorus.' This unbounded admiration for one oratorio has had two results not unconnected with each other; it has placed untold difficulties in the way of all musical advance, and has forced into oblivion

all the noble productions of the earlier English composers, both sacred and secular; at the same time it has encouraged a cold and slavish imitation of Handel's mannerisms, which has seemed to many composers since his day to constitute the only road to success in England. This imitation, it is hardly necessary to say, is utterly opposed to that healthy process of development which is seen in all the worthy successors of the other great composers, almost without exception; for Handel is almost the only one among the giants of music who founded no school except of those who pillaged his works, and thus wrought a natural revenge for the composers whom he himself, whether deliberately or unconsciously, had robbed. (3) All undue and exaggerated worship of a single achievement in art, to the exclusion, not only of the artist's work as a whole, but also of the productions of others not less great than he, must result in a condition of public taste which is for every reason to be deplored."

MR. E. PROUT.

"I do not consider myself an unbiassed judge in the question, because, as you probably know, I am one of the most ardent enthusiasts for Handel now living. I have made a special study of his works for nearly forty years, and love them now even more than I did in my youth. I am, therefore, not unprejudiced on the subject; but I should most certainly have been inclined to say that the influence of Handel, on the whole, was decidedly beneficial to English music because of its natural simplicity and directness of expression. Of course a mere servile copying of any composer's style is bad; but I do think that if some of the younger generation of composers would imitate the simple straightforwardness of Handel, instead of the elaborate complexity of Brahms and Wagner (whose genius, nevertheless, I should be the last to dispute), it would be all the better for English art."

SIR ROBERT STEWART, MUS. DOC.

"Were I in your place I would not take much heed of this latest Handelian theory, although broached by the clever ex-organist of St. Paul's. When people write or lecture about any much-discussed theme, growing tired of the beaten paths and of the stale platitudes of former writers and readers, they are sometimes tempted to evolve from their inner consciousness something fresher and perhaps a little paradoxical; thus, the late Sir George Macfarren had made up his mind about the Hanoverian succession, and you know how that mind, big and honest as it was, resembled not a little those laws of the Medes and Persians, which alter not. He had persuaded himself that it was the Hanoverian succession which had killed English music by encouraging foreigners to settle here and to gobble up the natives, one of these foreigners being the very man of whose undue worship Sir John Stainer was speaking the other day. But, making all allowance for Purcell's great and original genius (and I am probably as fully impressed by it as anyone in these kingdoms), let us ask ourselves what were those people whom Handel superseded; was the feeble and pedantic Arne one? or Pepusch, or Greene, or Boyce, or Wm. Hayes (the elder). . . . I must say that I am disposed to regard attacks on those foreigners who once came to England or are now visiting us as only a kind of disreputable trades-unionism. We are not at all so badly off as people want to make out—with a good climate, a wealthy nation, a settled government, peace at home, honour and security abroad, and with plenty of models for our home artists to copy (as they freely do, to do them justice). How would our growlers like to dwell in a district scourged by war, or to be forced, like poor Ferdinand Ries, to carry their muskets, and be scarcely allowed respite of a few days to procure a substitute? And what really was our 'undue worship' of Handel in England? We sang 'Judas,' 'Samson,' and 'Messiah' to death, for they were easy and cheap, and could be tinkered with harmonium and piano accompaniments; but we would not and do not pay for violins and oboes to do these works justice. What about that great British edition of Handel started forty years ago? A dozen or so volumes of scores full of omissions, edited by people some of whom never conducted an oratorio in their lives and knew nothing of what they pretended to do. Compare this with the 'Chrysander' edition and all the care and erudition bestowed upon it, and the deeply interesting discoveries to which that German edition has given birth. I must say I don't believe we at all know in England even as much as we ought to know of Handel's works; so far from unduly worshipping them and their gifted author. The 'Messiah,' indeed, might well get respite of twenty-five years or so; there would then be room for such works as the noble 'Dixit Dominus,' a *chef d'œuvre* of the largest calibre, never announced for performance, but lying in an oblivion shared with many Chandos Anthems, Te Deums, &c."

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF BEETHOVEN.

COLLECTED BY LA MARA.

Translated from the "Hamburger Signale," by MAY HERBERT.

(Continued from page 207.)

The next letter cannot have been written before Jan. 9th, 1817, as in the words: "The Symphony in F, so difficult of execution," Beethoven alludes to an article by Kanne which had appeared that day in the *Wiener Musik-Zeitung*, in which Beethoven's "Symphony in A major, so difficult of execution" is spoken of.—The Pianoforte arrangement of the F major Symphony was being done by Haslinger under Beethoven's supervision.

9.

I am sending my best g—ll—t the corrected Pianoforte Score; Czerni's corrections are to be accepted. The attention of the g—ll—t is again called to the many misdemeanours in the Pianoforte Score of the *Adjutant*, in consequence of which the same execution as yesterday is to be performed again today on his other ear. Even if he is found to be quite innocent, the execution is to take place just the same, so as to inspire him with fear and horror of all future ill-doings. In the meantime there is to be a report issued of yesterday's and today's executions.

I embrace my best g—li—t, and send him the pianoforte score of the "Symphony in F, so difficult of execution."

Yours etc. etc. etc.

10.

[1 Oct. 1819*]

I beg Messrs Artaria and Co to send me 6 copies of the Sonata in B flat, and of the Var[iations] on Scottish Songs.†

11.

Mödling,
October 10th 1819.

Dear Steiner,

The day before yesterday I left a note for you, begging you to come here before the house is sold by auction. If you could do this you would oblige me greatly. The auction is on the 13th of this month, which is next Wednesday. I should not like to do anything before consulting you. Of course the capital ought not in any way to be diminished, as my nephew‡ who intends to devote himself to science, will require the means to continue his studies after my death. If you have had the certificate drawn up by a lawyer, I will gratefully repay any expenses you may have incurred. I spoke to the *Generalleutnant* Tobiasser|| about Var[iations] by the Archduke: I suggested you, as I don't think you will lose by them, and it is always an honour to publish anything by such a *principe Professore*—§ As regards the *Unteroffizier*, please tell him not to sell any of the things I indicated to him until I come to town, and he is not to forget to tell the outgoing tenants and the housekeeper on the *Landstrasse* that the bell and the shutters belong to me. Now I shall hope to see you tomorrow or the day after: the morning would be best, as we must speak to H. A. Carbor, and then we can inspect the house and give our judgment, in which I shall act entirely by your opinion.¶

The enclosed letter is to Dr. Staudenheimer.** Please send it tomorrow afternoon not later than half past three to Count Harrach's house in the *Freyung*, but the *Unteroffizier* must wait for an answer, which must be taken to the post at once, so that I may get it on Tuesday. I expect you are coming on Tuesday, so perhaps you might kindly bring the answer yourself,—so I hope my request may be granted tomorrow or the day after.

In haste
your friend
and servant
BEETHOVEN.

12.

To Mr. Tobias Haslinger, etc. etc. etc.

* A letter to Artaria published by Nohl containing the same request, bears the above date, so we may conclude that the note before us was written about the same time.

† Op. 108 and 105.

‡ Beethoven's nephew Carl, who proved himself so unworthy of the care and affection bestowed upon him, and greatly embittered the composer's last years.

§ The name is written with a large flourish.

¶ The Variations composed by the Archduke Rudolf appeared at Haslinger's under the title, "Theme, composed by Ludwig van Beethoven, varied forty times and dedicated to the composer, by his pupil, E. E. H."

** Was Beethoven thinking of buying a house?

** Dr. Staudenheimer, Beethoven's doctor.

Vienna 12th Sept. 1826.

According to my exclusive privilege, the bearer of this is instructed, first to pull your right ear *cresc* . . . and then to pinch and shake your left ear *ffmo*, etc.

After this salutary Operation he is to tell you that I wish to take back all such works as you have not yet printed and published for the same base price which you basely paid.

For some time it was thought you would occupy the post of steward, but now you have been raised to that of bill-broker. Farewell former Tobias *juvenis* and *secundus* and present *primus caput Tobias primus*.

L. V. BEETHOVEN.

13.

To Herr Tobias Hasslinger formerly —*,
at present dealer in works of art.

[Arrived in Vienna 20th Sept., 1826.†].

My best North American music-seller
as well as wine merchant!

as I am only here for half a day, I ask you what Clementi's Piano-school costs, translated into German; please let me know at once and say whether you have got it, or where it is to be had otherwise?

Best Mr. Hm. Hm. Hm.!

Be very happy in your freshly painted office; see that the former nest becomes a beer-shop, as all beer-drinkers are good musicians, and will feel obliged to look in.

Yours most truly

BEETHOVEN.

Two more letters of Beethoven, which are in the Royal Library at Berlin may find a place here. The first was published by Nohl ("Briefe Beethoven's," 1865, No. 248) but in an incomplete form. With regard to this letter, an explanatory note by Schindler informs us, that Steiner and Hasslinger had threatened in 1823 to summons Beethoven to recover a debt of 800 Fl. (Wiener Währung). Beethoven had not then been paid for the great Mass, consequently he was constrained to sell a bankshare of his capital, which he considered inviolable, as he intended leaving it to his nephew.

14.

For Herr von Schindler.

[1823†.]

Dear S.

Don't forget about the B. S. || it is most important; I should not like to be summonsed for nothing and worse than nothing. My brother's behaviour is quite worthy of him. The tailor is coming to-day, but this time I hope I shall get rid of him with a few soft words. Yours in haste.

N.B.—I am not going out to-day as I don't feel well: if you like to come to dinner, come.

In the following letter, the last of those from Berlin, the signature alone is in Beethoven's writing. It refers to the Overture *Die Weihe des Hauses*, Op. 124.

15.

To Herr C. W. Henning

Capellmeister at Berlin.

To be left with Herr Trautwein, book and music-seller.

Vienna, 1st January 1825.

I have heard to-day with great surprise, that a work engraved by Mr. Trautwein, namely a "Festal Overture" by me, and arranged by you for four hands from the unpublished original score, is now in circulation.—I having agreed with Mr. Bethmann that this Overture was not to become the property of the Königstädter Theater at Berlin, for only the full score of the *Ruinen von Athen*, including the dances, was handed over to this theatre as its exclusive property,—but certainly not the Overture. It is now some time since I put this very Overture into the hands of an honorable publisher, and it will appear in about a fortnight, or at the latest in a month. You see that I am likely to have my honour called in question, for if I had signed a contract with Bethmann, I could never have dreamed of such a thing. As the mischief is partly done, please do all you can to prevent the circulation of this fourhanded Pfte. arrangement, unless I write to you. I give you my word of honour that I will do so,—and that before very long,—if any use can be made of it. I shall endeavour to render this, to me, most unpleasant occurrence, as little

* ehemaliger B.—ro—t.

† In a strange hand.

‡ In Schindler's writing. || i.e. Bank share.

annoying as possible both to you and to myself. You know that I have to live entirely by the productions of my brain; so imagine what harm this business may do me. I am convinced that you would sooner show me affection than hurt my feelings, and remain

Your most obedient servant

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN.*

(To be continued.)

ROYAL INSTITUTION.

At the outset of his second lecture on the "early developments of the forms of instrumental music"—delivered on the 13th inst.—Mr. Niecks referred to the most prominent composers of key-board instruments.—Andrea Gabrieli 1510-86, Claudio Merulo 1533-1604, Giovanni Gabrieli, nephew of the former, 1557-1612, and the Dutchman, Jan Pieters Sweelieck, 1560-1621, all famous organists in their day and connected with Venice. To properly estimate the works of these men it was necessary to remember their contemporaries, Titian, Tintoretto, Paul Veronese, and Caracci; Tasso, Cervantes, Montaigne, Spenser, and Shakspeare; Palestrina, Marenzio, Monteverde, Orlando Lassus, Tye, Tallis, Byrde, Morley, Dowland, Bull, and Orlando Gibbons. The first sonatas which have come down to us were those of Giovanni Gabrieli, who was a brilliant genius, and did much for the development of instrumental music, both by purely instrumental compositions, and by instrumental accompaniments to his vocal works. Claudio Merulo was organist of St. Mark's, Venice, from 1557 to 1566, and is the only one of the four mentioned who owed his reputation solely to his organ compositions. Frescobaldi, 1583 to 1644, organist to St. Peter's, Rome, displayed in his works an inventiveness and freedom which still retained their freshness. Sixty-eight of his compositions were recently published through Messrs. Breitkopf and Härtel. His works comprised Capricci, Ricercari, Canzone alla francese, Passacaglie, and Toccate. His improvised Toccato were, according to a contemporary musician, full of *finesses* and admirable invention, and well laid out to display the skill of the virtuoso. Froberger, also an organist, was more distinctly modern than any other of his contemporaries; a great part of his works, however, were still in manuscript, although they possessed considerable musical value, and were something more than mere historical curiosities. J. S. Bach, in whom the talent of this epoch culminated, really belonged to the eighteenth century, and therefore was beyond the range of the present lectures. An important factor in the development of instrumental form was the French harpsichord school, of which Champion de Chambonnières, Henri d'Anglebert, François Couperin, and finally Rameau—the last belonging to the eighteenth century—were the chief exponents. The characteristics of this school were slowness of subject-matter, and a pleasing daintiness, grace, and elegance of style; a placing together of parts rather than a dovetailing and interlacing; the cultivation of the

* In the Royal Library at Berlin there are two letters relating to the above, one from the addressee Henning to Beethoven, the other from Wilhelm Härtel to Trautwein, the publisher of the Overture-arrangement in question. Likewise No. 24 of a periodical entitled "Wegweiser im Gebiete der Künste und Wissenschaften" (Dresden), which contains the following explanation:

"Herr L. van Beethoven of Vienna has inserted the following notice in No. 23 of the Wiener Zeitschrift für Kunst, Litteratur und Mode, and probably also in other journals:

Notice!

I consider it my duty to warn the musical public against a fourhanded Pfte. arrangement of my last Overture; which is an entire failure and does not adhere to the original score, and has been published by Trautwein of Berlin. There is all the more reason for this, as the Pfte. scores for two and four hands arranged by Herr Carl Czerny are absolutely faithful to the original score, and will shortly appear in the only authorized edition.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN.

My object in the following explanation is to clear up several points in the above notice, which is in many ways very compromising to my good name.

Herr Concertmeister Henning himself offered me the arrangement in question of Herr v. Beethoven's Overture for publication last October. As he desired that his own name should appear on the title-page as well as that of Beethoven (which it eventually did) thus publicly proving his right to make the arrangement, I as a publisher had no reason to doubt that Herr Henning had received full authorization to arrange this Overture, even if he had not, by various other statements placed the matter beyond a doubt, and the unsupported declaration of Herr v. Beethoven that the promised arrangements of Herr Czerny will be the only correct editions, is not sufficient to annul the edition published by me.

Equally serious is Herr van Beethoven's charge that the edition published by me is an entire failure and does not agree with the original score, Herr Henning having strictly adhered to the original, and avoided anything which could have led to any deviation from it.

Berlin, 15th March 1825.

L. TRAUTWEIN
book and music-seller.

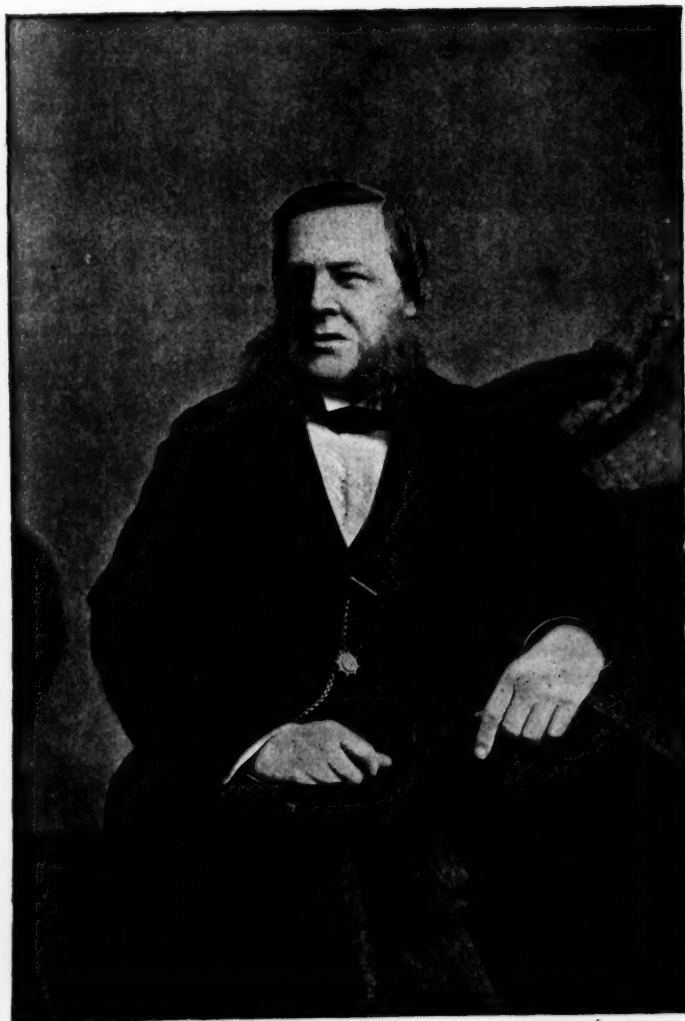
I hereby testify that the above declaration is strictly in accordance with the truth, and that I am at any time ready to prove my authorization for editing the arrangement in question.

C. W. HENNING, Concertmeister.

Henning further declared in the letter to Beethoven, that the latter had sold the score both of the Overture and of the *Ruinen von Athen* to the directors of the Königstädter Theater for their own use and benefit, for 56 napoleons, with the sole reservation that the Overture should not be published for a year.

Beethoven alludes to the matter in a letter to Schott of Febr. 5th 1825. (Nohl, *Neue Briefe B.'s* 1867, No. 284)."





THE LATE DR. HENRY WYLDE.

From a photograph by DONE and BALL, Baker-street.

Suite in preference to the Sonata; and the neglect of polyphony. With regard to the above-mentioned forms, it was easier to say what they were not than what they were. With the exception of dance music, composers adopted for the most part the fugal form, which, however, materially differed from our conception of a regular fugue, the composer being at liberty to use as many themes as he liked, and to introduce them as his fancy dictated. Mr. Niecks did not think the attempts made to differentiate the early sonata worth recording. The early sonata dated from the end of the sixteenth century, the word being used in its simple meaning "to play upon an instrument." In the seventeenth century the music so designated consisted generally of two quick movements, with a slow one between them, but played without the pauses to which we are accustomed. It was often impossible, however, to distinguish between the early Sonata, Sinfonia and Canzona, and the Fantasia, Ricercara and Capriccio; sometimes indeed the same piece was variously named by different publishers. Any difference that did exist was really more in the character of the music than in form of construction.

The following most interesting selection was then admirably played by a small orchestra composed of students from the Royal Academy of Music: an eight part "Canzona," by Giovanni Gabrieli (1597), Mr. Niecks drawing attention to the peculiar rhythm — $\cup \cup$ by which this form was generally distinguished; two fragments from a Sonata by Gio. B. Fontana, about 1630, and from two "Canzone a tre" by Tarquinio Merula (about 1639), which showed the great progress which had taken place in the twenty-five years preceding, and were remarkable for their lightness in comparison with the stiffness and heaviness which prevailed at the end of the sixteenth century; a Sonata for two violins, viola, and bass, by Massimiliano Neri (1651), fugal in character; a motive from a Sonata by Giovanni Legrenzi (1655), and "La Rosetta," a Sonata for two violins and bass by the same composer (1671), which contained some excellent writing for the strings; a "Sonata con tre instrumenti, con il basso continuo," Op. 1, by Giuseppe Torelli (1686)—a composer who, although not an inventive genius of the first order, desired to be better known than he was; and parts of a "Sonata da chiesa" and "Sonata da camera," for violin and thorough-bass, Op. 5, Nos. 1 and 9, by Arcangelo Corelli (1700), who secured for himself a prominent place in history by the nobility and harmoniousness of his compositions.

THE LATE DR. WYLDE.

The death of Dr. Henry Wyld removes a figure whose importance in the history of English music—we should, perhaps, say of music in England—is hardly to be estimated by the younger generation. To them he is known chiefly as the founder and director of the London Academy of Music, which, since its establishment in 1862, has done so much undoubtedly good work. Born in 1822, he was destined by his family for the Church, but so marked were his leanings toward, and capacity for, a musical career that he was placed in the hands of Moscheles, from whom he passed under the instruction of Cipriani Potter at the Royal Academy of Music. At the comparatively early age of twenty-eight he obtained the degree of Mus.Doc. at Cambridge, and at the International Exhibitions of 1851 and 1862 he was selected as one of the jurors in the Musical Instrument Section. In the following year he was appointed Professor of Music at Gresham College. He was largely concerned in 1852 in the institution of the "New" Philharmonic Concerts, of which he was for many years conductor, being engaged in that capacity, together with Lindpaintner and Spohr, after the brilliant inaugural season under Berlioz. At these concerts several of his own works were produced, and it was owing to his enterprise that the English public had opportunity of making acquaintance with much of the modern music represented by Berlioz. His claims on the remembrance of musicians to-day, moreover, are also based upon the useful works which he wrote on theoretical subjects. Of these the last, a treatise on "The Evolution of the Beautiful in Music," not long ago reviewed in these columns, is also by far the best. His death, which took place unexpectedly on Thursday afternoon of last week, must be deplored by all who have reverence for an earnest and well-spent life.

Poets are all who love—who feel great truths—
And tell them; and the truth of truths is love.

Bailey's Festus.

The Dramatic World.

"MISS CINDERELLA" AND FIRST PIECES.

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, 19TH MARCH, 1890.

MY DEAR MR. FIELDMOUSE,—

Much as most things theatrical, and most other things, have changed since your time, "first pieces" have changed more. I will but explain that by "your time" I mean say forty years ago, when with a flash the dark-lantern of your mind will throw its little halo on the farces that were; and then I will tell you of the "comediettas" that are.

You recollect, to begin with, that, in the days that are no more, first-pieces came last; or, to be more like Euclid, and less like the Irishman who filled the jest-books of those times—he is dead now, and I am not sure that jest-books are not dead with him—forty years ago, I say, the little funny piece ended the programme and the long serious one began it. Which is so no more.

On that account, perhaps, "first piece" was not then a byword, nor farce-actor a term of contempt. Buckstone, Harley, Wright, the great Keeley himself—these were not men of little mark, yet you could pay your shilling at half price, and go in to see them for an hour in a screaming farce: an "Adelphi screamer," they would call it sometimes. Oh heavens, who ever screams at the Adelphi now—except the heroine, except the heroine, except the heroine?

Many of the farces, too, as well as those who acted in them, were funny, forty years ago; and this because they were generally adapted from Labiche—one of the Immortals, as surely as if he had never been made an Academician. They were generally a good deal spoilt in their transportation across the Channel, I must own; yet not when Maddison Morton was the transporter—there was art in "Box and Cox" and wit in "Betsy Baker." Yes, in the best of them there was merit: deftness of construction, humour of phrase, a certain rough cleverness of character-drawing—this last always a sign of French origin.

For their faults—wait till the succeeding period, and you will see them, naked if not unashamed. For to the time of good farces well acted there succeeded a time that has only slowly, slowly passed away, of bad farces (or old ones once good, grown entirely stale and unendurable), most terribly, most hopelessly ill-played. Go now to our two melodrama-theatres of the West—I will not name them; they are patent to be seen. Go, and behold some ancient farce, played because it is "non-payable"—the wretched author who spoilt it from the French has gone to his account and answered for it, a clear generation ago. See—see the funny man in large check trousers (where does he get such things now?) in a velvet waistcoat, and a great white hat. Behold the heavy father in a blue coat with brass buttons—they wore them under the Georges, and he still clings to one, the sole survivor. Mark the old lady, whose costume I, unversed in furbelows, will not attempt to paint; but I believe that my nurse, who left the scene before the Second Exhibition, wore the last in London.

And note what things they do—what you are asked to laugh at, because, while you were in drawers, your father (so tradition has it) laughed consumedly when Wright or Harley did them. They are not, perhaps, vulgar in the lowest sense—except certain "gags," certain bits of business reserved for Saturday night in the country, or for Scotch towns, where nothing else will raise an audible laugh; but oh, their astonishing stupidity, oh their dulness!

Even as these two theatres are still—or were yesterday, for things

change rapidly, and one is not tempted to go often to see whether the accursed thing yet live—even thus (I would tell the youngest playgoer) were all but two or three of our London houses, not a dozen years ago. And now—mercy and miracles, what a turn here is, as Mrs. Malaprop has said. At every genteel theatre you shall have your genteel little comedy—if there is time for any “foreword” at all—which is more often a little sad than at all gay, and which calls itself “Dream Faces” (with waltz refrain *obbligato*) or “Sweetheart, Goodbye” (with memories of the song), or “One Summer Night,” or “The Parting of the Ways.” Or indeed, to come to the point, “Miss Cinderella.”

They are, perhaps, mild little plays, these, as a rule. None of those that I have mentioned will be likely to live over long in the playgoer's memory. Yet, I pray you to note, they are void of all offence, and they may be made—sometimes are made—works of real art. Though often enough their story is a mere stage-convention treated in a fashion too slight and slipshod for a full-grown play, yet they have this great advantage, that in their little lifetime of half an hour they do not actually need any conventionality at all to hold them together, to give them backbone. If they are but pretty, they may be almost wholly invertebrate; and thus, with no call for an actual “plot,” Daudet and Feuillet have given us little masterpieces of quiet observation—charming cabinet-pictures that we English are always trying to copy, and sometimes not without success. For young authors and for young actors here are real chances of good work, of studies from little corners of that Nature which is too vast for them, as yet, to paint *en grand*.

So another little comedy made its bow, last Saturday evening, at the Avenue: “Miss Cinderella,” by Mr. Walkes—quite unambitious, simple, pretty, innocent of novelty. The dialogue was perhaps not remarkable, but I think people enjoyed the tiny play; there was still the scent of the old fairy tale hanging round it, and that has its undying charm. Moreover, the two chief parts were played just as they should have been. Margery-Cinderella showed that London has, in Miss Laura Graves, yet another young heroine full of sympathy and intelligence, though lacking as yet in the practice which teaches one how to be colloquial; and, as her father, Mr. Nutcombe Gould looked and acted an old gentleman with a curious charm. He, too, cannot altogether manage his voice, in its higher notes especially; but he is interesting—extremely interesting. The other parts were not quite so well acted; but in the whole production there was care, thought, art.

And you may see it, my dear Mr. Fieldmouse; you may see it!

Your conscientious

MUS IN URBE.

THE DRAMATISTS.

XXVII.—CALDERON.—“DEVOTION TO THE CROSS.”

To take Calderon at his strongest one must take him, as has been said, when his subject is religion; and there is no more striking tragedy of religion than his “La Devocion a la Cruz” (“Devotion to the Cross.”)

Its first scene is a desert place in the midst of mountains: far in the distance one can see a cross. But the action of the play begins, not with the solemnity for which such surroundings would prepare us, but with the comic lamentations of two peasants, Gil and Menga, over the obstinacy of their she-ass, who will not budge. After this, however, two of the principal characters enter, and the serious story begins.

Lisardo bids Eusebio draw and defend himself: in this lonely place they will not be interrupted. He throws upon the ground the cause of quarrel—a packet of letters addressed by Eusebio to his (Lisardo's) sister Julia. In one of Calderon's long introductory speeches he tells their story. They

are poor, but Julia shall not marry one of unknown birth; she shall enter a convent and Eusebio shall die, for having wooed his friend's sister.

For Eusebio, as he himself now proudly avers, is a foundling. He was picked up at the foot of a cross, by shepherds who for three days had not ventured to approach, because of prowling beasts, which yet had not touched the sacred child. A rich man, whose name he now bears, adopted him; he relates no less than six miracles which happened to him as a child; and his proud title is “Eusebio of the Cross.” Moreover, if Julia may not be his wife she shall be his mistress.

They fight. Lisardo falls, mortally wounded; but, as he begs, “by the cross on which Christ perished,” that he may not die without confession, Eusebio bears him on his shoulders to a neighbouring hermitage. The peasants creep in and follow them.

Then we go to Julia's quiet room, where she is chatting with her maid—one of her speeches almost exactly reproduces a famous one in the similar scene of the “Two Gentlemen of Verona.” Then Eusebio steals in, and begs her to flee with him; but hides, as Curcio, her father, enters. Curcio declares his intention of sending Julia to a convent: and, as she demurs, swears that he does not believe her to be his child at all—her mother, as he always thought, played him false. He is telling the story, when four peasants bear in the body of Lisardo. The father, finding that the murderer was Eusebio, will listen no more to Julia, but dooms her instantly to a convent or death; and goes.

She is left alone, with her dead brother and the man who slew him. In a strange and powerful scene, she bids her lover to go from her for ever. He asks her to kill him there and then; but, as she will not, swears never to forsake his hope of winning her.

In the next act Curcio—with his followers, pursuing Eusebio,—stands at the foot of the lonely mountain-cross. In a long soliloquy he tells the story of his daughter's miraculous birth. He had suspected his wife: she, clinging to that cross, had vowed her innocence. After a moment's hesitation, he plunged his sword again and again into the air, trying in vain to pierce her breast. He fled, in superstitious horror; and when he reached his home he met her, smiling and unharmed, and bearing at her breast a lovely child—Julia. She had a strange belief that another child had been born and left to perish at the foot of the cross.

Eusebio is being savagely hunted down; his wealth, his castles, have been seized, and he has turned robber. As the act opens, a shot from one of his followers has struck down a traveller—a venerable priest; but a tract on the “Miracles of the Cross,” carried in the old man's breast, has saved him, and Eusebio lets him go free, and asks his prayers. In return, Alberto (the old priest) promises that if the brigand, when death is near, will but call for him, he will hasten to receive his dying confession—and so save his soul. To die unconfessed is the sole thing that our religious robber fears.

And now, when he finds that Julia is in a convent, Eusebio resolves upon a terrible sacrilege: he will make his way into the holy place, and carry her off.

It is midnight. A ladder is placed against the convent-wall: he climbs up, though an unearthly light hovers before him—even he trembles, but he dashes on: “hell and all its fires shall not stop him.”

With sacrilegious foot, he paces noiselessly the corridors: in the flickering moonlight he comes along, looking in at the half-opened door of every cell. She is not here—not here—but in the last cell he sees a light: he withdraws a curtain: there, in her habit as a nun, she lies asleep, the bride of heaven.

She wakes. She struggles wildly against his passionate pleadings and her own love: then steps approach, and she hides him in an empty cell.

Next we see him fleeing wildly not with, but from her. As he had pressed her in his arms he had seen, for the first time, her birthmark, the holy cross, upon her breast. Wild with terror he rushes into the night, and falls from the convent wall: but he rises unhurt, and flees on, followed by flaming thunderbolts.

Julia is left alone, on the high convent wall, in the midnight, deserted: conscious of sin, despairing, penitent, savage: at last she goes forth into the blackness with a wild resolution, “a destroying angel, fallen from the sky . . . to shake Sin itself with horror and Hell with fear.”

After three days of wandering she meets Eusebio. Disguised as a man, she challenges him to fight. He will not; and she reveals herself,—and tells him of the savage murders which now mark her path through the world.

Even Eusebio trembles before this terrible woman; but the brigands are soon attacked, and he and she both fight like demons. Eusebio meets Curcio—but an instinct holds the hands of the young man and the old.

When, later in the battle, Eusebio is mortally wounded, and lies beneath the cross, Curcio finds—by the sacred birthmark on his breast—that this is his lost son.

But Eusebio cries only for "Alberto! Alberto!" and when the confessor comes not, dies in despair. Then a strange thing happens. Peasants bury Eusebio in a rude, unblest grave. In the night it is guarded by a comic peasant—who, in an earlier scene, hearing that the robbers respect the Holy Cross, has appeared in a dress which is all over crosses!

The old priest comes. Eusebio calls him, from the grave; and the corpse comes out to be confessed. Then Julia, taken prisoner, finds to her horror that her lover was her brother too; and Curcio is about to slay his guilty child, but she clings to the cross, and, by a final miracle, vanishes. "And," says one of the characters, "with this strange denouement the author ends 'Devotion to the Cross.'"

NOTES AND NEWS.

An actor sometimes excellent, always firm and useful, a man popular with a wide circle and deeply loved by his friends, John Maclean died almost suddenly last Saturday morning, and his death was keenly felt, especially among his brother-actors and brother Freemasons. "He was the best working Mason I ever knew," said a journalist last Saturday night; and there was no actor who did not respect, hardly one who did not know and like him. Perhaps because he had invariably played "old men" for more than thirty years almost everyone thought him a good deal older than he was; but indeed his silver locks only shaded the wrinkles of five and fifty years. Our readers must remember him in many parts; perhaps his most finished and charming performance was that of the old Earl in Robertson's "Dreams." At the Savage Club he was famous as a singer and a storyteller, and—there, as everywhere—as the very "prince of good fellows."

Too late for notice this week, Mr. Buchanan's "Tomboy," which is Sheridan's "Trip to Scarborough," which is Vanbrugh's "Relapse," was produced on Thursday afternoon at the Vaudeville, with Miss Winifred Emery and Mr. Thomas Thorne in the famous parts of Miss Hoyden and Lord Foppington. It is said that Mr. Buchanan's labours have been by no means confined to a revision of the text of Sheridan or of Vanbrugh; he has, it would seem, practically elaborated a new play out of the underplot of "The Relapse"—whose main plot, with the flighty Berinthis and the wavering Amanda, has to all intents and purposes disappeared. So much the better for our morals; for our wits we will say nothing—as, indeed, there is not much to be said for them.

Mr. Merivale will have an unrivalled cast for his adaptation of the "Bride of Lammermoor"—Scott's one tragedy, so terrible that we (like Thackeray) have never been able to read it again, but have left the gloomy Master of Ravenswood sticking fast in the sands of the Kelpie's Flow. Besides Mr. Irving and Miss Helen Terry, that magnificent actor, Mr. Wenman, will appear at the Lyceum. Mr. Terriass (as has been said) will rejoin his old company, and Mr. Alfred Bishop, Mr. Macklin, and Miss Annie Irish are all to make their bows at Wellington-street. A recruit even more notable is Mr. Mackintosh, who will find in Caleb Balderstone his first Scotch part—so far, that is, as London has had the chance of knowing. The old steward ought to be invaluable as a relief to the gloomy story; and certainly we have no actor who could play him as Mr. Mackintosh should.

Mr. William Terriass, before he goes to the Lyceum, is to produce at Drury Lane Mr. Steele Mackaye's successful melodrama of the French Revolution, "Paul Kauvar." The play is said to be brimful of sensations new and old—the well-trying ones preponderating, as of right—and, as it contains strong parts for Mr. Terriass and Mr. Harry Nicholls, good chances for the scene-painter and the costumier, and (it is whispered) an abundance of literary demerit, Mr. Augustus Harris may well be hopeful.

Mr. Nicholls, by the way, is a busy man. He is soon to play in "Paul Kauvar"; he is immediately to go on tour—for a fortnight only—with Mr. Yardley's enlarged version of Messrs. Rose and Harris's old burlesque, "Venus"; and his farcical comedy, "The Housemaid" (written in collaboration with Mr. Lestocq) is likely to be the next production at the Comedy Theatre.

Let us be the first to contradict the statement that Miss Cissie Grahame is not going to revive "Our Regiment" at Terry's Theatre. We have the best authority for saying that she is thinking of giving a series of *matinées* of Mr. Hamilton's play.

"The Great Judge," as we said, was far too transpontine a title for the Haymarket, and the new play is to be christened "The Village Priest"—which is neither distinctively transpontine nor cispontine, but merely good.

Mr. Pinero's new comedy at the Court is not, we hear, to be as purely farcical as were "The Magistrate" and his colleagues; it is to depend more on quaintness of character-drawing than on outrageousness of incident. This is good news, and the engagement for one of the principal characters of Mr. Herbert Waring tends to confirm it. Mr. Waring is essentially not a farcical actor, and by this very quality of seriousness made his part in "The Hobby Horse" stand out.

Poor Mr. Pinero! How many enemies he must have made by adjudging the prize at a "one-act play competition." The winner was a Mr. Val Conson—which sounds like a legal joke—his play a comedieta called "Humble Pie," and the prize a gold medal and "one performance at a *matinée*." Poor Mr. Val Conson!

Mr. George Alexander now plays Mr. Terry's part in "Dr. Bill," and plays it very well. Indeed his quiet, refined style gains as much by removal from the big and noisy Adelphi as Mr. Terry's may be expected to gain by transference to the larger stage of the Haymarket.

"Dick Venables" may be looked for in the first week of April at the Shaftesbury, where "The Middleman" ends its successful career on March 29. Then will Londoners once more have the opportunity of seeing their favourite Mr. Willard in a "Willard part."

The late Sir Charles Young's "Charms" was played by the West London Club at their invitation performance at the Victoria Hall, Archer-street on Saturday last. The room was crowded, and the heat quite overpowering. "Charms," besides being full of dramatic interest and strong situations, has the advantage of being unhackneyed by amateurs. Indeed it is surprising that the piece has not found more favour on the professional stage. By far the best-played part was the Philip Frere of Mr. Talbot Smart, who, although hardly old enough in appearance for the man who is "guide, philosopher, and friend" to young Arthur Medwin, acted with an amount of ease and finish which is not often seen in amateurs. Arthur Medwin was played with considerable earnestness and feeling by Mr. Vernon Sansbury, but his acting was marred by somewhat awkward movements—the difficulty amateurs so often experience of not knowing what to do with their arms and legs on the stage. Mr. S. Faversham overdid the villain both in appearance and acting—his appearance was suggestive of Gaiety burlesque and his acting transpontine. He spoke with a foreign accent, which was good when he remembered it, but it frequently disappeared altogether. Mr. Dicketts played a typical stage masher in the usual yellow wig, and Mr. J. H. Stanton the Rev. Mr. Bertram. Miss Edith Vincent as the adventuress had evidently carefully studied the part, but it did not suit her. This young lady, who has undoubted ability, would do well to confine herself to lighter and more girlish impersonations. As the simple country girl, Amy Bertram, Miss Ada Ricketts played in a natural and unaffected manner. The performance as a whole went smoothly, and although many of the cast were evidently novices in acting there were signs of care and attention—too often wanting at amateur performances.

The Organ World.

LENTEN MUSIC.

BY F. GILBERT WEBB.

The cultured mind which takes delight in the "ologies" and "isms" of modern research is apt to regard commerce as beneath its consideration, and yet much might be learned by observance of the many and peculiar fluctuations of trade, for these more surely than the attendances at concerts and art galleries indicate the proclivities and tastes of the people. The latter show superlatively the fashion of the hour, but the former the inclinations prevalent in the home, and therefore more truly the individual taste. Thus the increasing sale of Lenten works is not only a satisfactory sign of how music is becoming more an integral part of daily life, but points to a curious change taking place in our midst with regard to the observance of Lent.

Each succeeding year at this season an increased number of churches invite their congregations and others to attend the performance of various oratorios or services of which music forms a conspicuous part, and the artistic excellence generally attained at which fully justifies their existence, while more numerous congregations also show the growing appreciation in which these efforts are estimated. In this the church is only following ancient custom; the oratorio was born in the church, or, more correctly, in the building adjoining, called in Italian the "oratorio," and the cause of its birth was the desire to attract the people from what were deemed less profitable entertainments, and to give them a more lively interest in scriptural history and matters pertaining to the church. It is easy to foresee, however, that should the present procedure continue, which is in every way probable, the season of Lent will become that which may be termed the concert season of the church, and the custom or fashion will be set up of observing Lent more by attending performances of sacred musical works than by fasting. The former method is much more pleasant, and, therefore, in accordance with the spirit of the age.

Although this may not meet with everyone's approval, especially among the conservative-minded, it must be hailed by the artistic enthusiast with much satisfaction, for nothing but good can result from an intimate acquaintance thus gained with some of the most beautiful and inspired compositions, which, moreover, heard week after week during Lent cannot fail to refine and leave a salutary impression on the minds of the auditors. The mere assemblage for a laudable purpose and in a building with which all that is elevating and best is so intimately associated, exerts a moral influence unattainable by the finest performance of oratorio in the concert room. Those organists, therefore, who by hard work—and only organists know how hard the work often is—successfully give performances of sacred music in their churches not only do much for the furtherance of their art but for the progress of humanity, and should meet with every support and encouragement both from the clergy and laity. It is to be hoped, however, that the explanatory remarks sometimes indulged in by the vicar previous to or during the performance of an oratorio will be speedily abandoned. If the music be worthy of the occasion it is quite able to speak for itself, and impress the lesson conveyed by the text. At penny readings it may be necessary to explain the story and moral (if one can be found) of each song before it is sung; but the time has gone by that required an explanation of the "Elijah;" and it is worse than foolish to tell a congregation, as was recently done in a London church, that they were not there to listen to the music, but as an act of worship. No good can come from such prevarication. True worship is far more likely to result from listening to noble conceptions than to proceed from self-deception.

NOTES.

The Birmingham Town Hall organ, which has been reconstructed by Hill, of London, at a cost of £3,000, is now so far complete as to enable the city organist, Mr. W. C. Perkins, to give his first recital on it. The occasion is looked upon as an event of great importance, and the committee have issued invitations which, according to the latest reports, weigh considerably over half a hundred-weight, and total something like 2,500. The Mayor and

Corporation will be present, and his Worship will be asked to take over the control of the organ on behalf of the Council. It is pleasing to be able to state that the sum of £3,000, which the reconstruction of the organ has cost, has been entirely defrayed by private donations. The date fixed for the first Recital is Saturday afternoon, the 29th. On the six Saturdays following, recitals will be given by Dr. Bridge, of Westminster Abbey; Dr. Turpin, Dr. Pearce, of Glasgow; Mr. Kendrick-Pyne, of Manchester; and Mr. A. J. Eyre, of the Crystal Palace.

Last Saturday's "Popular Organ Recital" at the Bow and Bromley Institute was given by Mr. T. Tertius Noble, who presented and carried out most successfully an interesting programme, in which he was assisted by Miss Minnie Chamberlain (vocalist), Miss Isabella Donkersley (violin), and Mr. A. Claude Hobday (contra bass); together with an orchestra composed of students of the R.C.M. Handel's concerto in A major, Adam's overture in C minor, and the Finale from Widor's Symphony, No. 2, had places in the programme.

THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF PAINTERS IN WATER COLOURS.

In the exhibitions held by a body such as the Institute we should find represented, with some accuracy, the state, for the time being, of the art with which the members of that body are concerned. And it would appear that the Institute does entertain a purpose of this kind, since its liberality in according space to the works submitted is uninfluenced by prejudice in favour of this or that technique or style of treatment. For instance, on the same walls we find Mr. Lewis's "Old Fishing Village" (No. 144) with many of its pleasant tones expressed by means of opaque colour, and Mr. Cotman's "Full Tide at Bosham" (No. 52) with its expanse of sea and sky recorded in transparent tints, while subject pieces are allowed to range from the "Mistress Dolly" of Mr. W. H. Margetson to the capture of "French Guns at Waterloo" by Mr. W. B. Woollen. This we must accept as evidence of extreme liberality. Before leaving the above-mentioned works, we should like to say that the warm tones which lend some poetry to Mrs. Lewis's pictures might have been combined with more breadth of treatment to effect a happier result; and of "Mistress Dolly" (No. 121) that it is a charming little glimpse of colour. Perhaps the crimson tints among the fallen leaves are exaggerated, but, together with the varied tones in the maiden's pinkish dress, in the old beech trunks, and the yellowish foliage, they produce a very pleasing effect. In Mr. Otto Sinding's "Fugitives" (No. 212) there is a successful portrayal of rapid motion suggested in the action of the galloping horse and his well-seated rider. The scene, with the loose, jagged masses of rock under a lowering sky, is well treated in a low key, the dark tones of which lend a certain mysterious power to the work. The drawing, however, will not altogether stand criticism, the "near-side" knee being distinctly faulty in its giant proportions.

Mr. Alfred Parsons presents a striking picture, with sunlight for a leading theme, in "Goldfinches" (No. 228). The three figures amid the thistledown suggest that baneful composition which so often hampers the landscape painter, but they are not obtrusive enough to spoil a piece of really strong naturalistic painting. The neighbouring view of the "Isthmian Club, Piccadilly," (No. 238), by Miss Rose Barton, also contains some good work. At some distance from these we find a simple subject slightly treated by Mr. Cotman in "St. Ives" (No. 283). The old bridge, with a gaunt edifice rising in the centre, the buildings on either side of the river and sky under the morning light, form an attractive little picture. An equally unpretentious subject is found by Mr. Spenlove-Spenlove in the "Autumn Glow" seen between the old beech trees in No. 377. Here the warm sky, the purple-tinted trees which bound the distance, the hues of the three beech stems, and rich, broken, brown tones in the foreground are a basis for thorough artistic treatment. So, again, is the charm of colour which attracts notice in Miss Conder's "Autumn Leaves" (No. 508). The theme is modest—nothing but an old doorway set back in reddish tinted masonry overhung with trailing creeper. Slight work, perhaps, but dainty. In Mr. Massey's view of the "Scheldt off Antwerp" (No. 517) there is breadth of handling, good colour, and transparency; while Mr. J. T. Rowe's "Castle Grounds, Nottingham" (No. 547) is successful in the contrast of the sombre greys of the deep foreground of flagstones with the bright tints

of the sky and the colour lent to the house-tops by the rays of the sun. Mr. W. Collins's "B.C. 85" (No. 559) is chiefly remarkable for its breadth. A crowd of warriors and priests are attending at the celebration of Druidical rites performed by a group of venerable ministrants in a forest glade. The aim of the artist appears to have been a bold treatment of masses, which is displayed throughout, as well in the colours in the crowd as in the old oaks which form the background to the scene. But the best subject picture is undoubtedly "The Poacher" (No. 718), sent by Mr. MacIver Grierson. In this work, too, there lies some of the very best painting. Breadth of conception and good technique will express the character of the work, while for the subject we have the figure of a man whose poaching has resulted in accident to himself, and who, as he sits in the gloom of his own home is filled with anxiety as to the ultimate result of the night's work. The unconsciousness of the child who quietly proceeds with a meal is quaintly contrasted with the eagerness of the group of neighbours who appear at the opening door, and whose curiosity fills the man's mind with disquiet. The management of the light which streams in at the door, outlining those who are beyond it with clear white, is very strong, and the simple manner in which the shadowed corners of the room are painted suggests knowledge and confidence in the painter. All these good things are there in the Institute Exhibition, in addition to others which we should like to notice at greater length, such as Mr. Addison's "Church on the Marsh" (No. 153) and Mr. Fraser's "Untrodden Ways" (No. 592), with their feeling for the delicate tints which characterise grey weather and the grace belonging to trees bared of their foliage. The knowing horses in Mr. Dollman's "Hawks dinna pike out Hawks den" (No. 427), where we find more interest in the trusty servants than in the highwaymen who bestride them; the "Young Mariners" (No. 606), by A. E. Fisher, and the group of "Porter Fishwomen" (No. 654), by H. Caffieri, both pleasant colour notes, as well as the ragged riverside growths portrayed by Mr. Alfred East and Mr. Frank Batson in Nos. 673 and 204 respectively. Yet we leave the gallery with a feeling of disappointment. These works cannot surely be the very best which our artists can produce?

SOME NEW ENGLISH WORKS.

Visitors to Mr. Baldry's studio, during the four days covered by the invitation, were doubtless chiefly attracted by the portrait of Miss Alma Murray in the character of Beatrice Cenci. The work is full of forcible painting, but is not quite finished, owing, we might conclude, to the accident to Miss Alma Murray which has been duly recorded. However, a room full of pictures from Christchurch was quite worthy of a visit for itself. These are characterised by graceful conception expressed in a free manner. "An Autumn Afternoon"—intended, we believe, for the "New English Art Club" Exhibition—is full of strong colour and bright warm light, an aspect under which the Priory is seen to the best advantage. A small view of the Isle of Wight sketched from the coast, a large river bank scene boldly handled, together with a glowing evening piece would hold their places with work of a high rank.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF PAINTER ETCHERS.

To the general public the loan collection of Rembrandt etchings at the above Society's exhibition will form the chief attraction. And a fine collection it is, showing the great master's work varying in states and in subjects. But it means much, to an artist, to find that the average quality of the modern work does not appear at once to be altogether out of place in its proximity to the productions of the "Great Master of Painter Engraving." In the space at our command it would be impossible to balance the claims of each contributor's work, and in mentioning some of the best examples in the gallery we hope to induce our readers to give some attention to an exhibition which is particularly free from scamped or vulgar work. Mr. Frank Short takes the lead, not unnaturally, since he sends etchings, mezzotints, aquatints, and dry points. An example of the last named shows not only most excellent work but also that an artist can make an interesting picture of a melancholy and even dreary subject. "A Wintery Blast on the Stourbridge Canal" is not a promising theme; the line of black, gaunt trees which cross the picture, the

two or three chimneys, and the barge frozen in on the canal itself are most commonplace details; but the picture is a work of art with much interest. "The Curfew," which comes next in the catalogue, and "Rye Pier" afford examples of aquatint work strong in their breadth of treatment, while the mezzotint, "The West's Good Night to the East," gives undoubted proof of a master hand doing the will of a sympathetic mind. The subject is simple, and the small size of the plate does not rob the simplicity of its accompanying grandeur. A bank of cloud rising high above a hill which slopes to the waterside, dealt with in a few gradations of warm brown tint, tells a story of restful happiness with all the power of truth. There is good work in Mr. Edward Slocombe's "Sketch from a Bridge" at Ghent, although the drawing of the craft just below would suggest that they are immensely long. Near this picture hangs the example from Mr. Menpes, which we like best of all those he exhibits. "Dutch Eel Schuyts" form the subject and the success. Mr. Thos. Huson's "When the wind blows in from the Sea" is vigorous, but the medium is not quite a happy one for rendering the texture of rolling waves. Of Mr. William Strang's "Salvation Army" we can only say that it shows a most masterly treatment of a hideous subject.

NOTES FROM ROME.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

ROME, MARCH 15.

The opera season at the Argentina Theatre is drawing to an end. "La Traviata" was given last week, with Madame Bellincioni as Violetta, and on Wednesday last the much-talked-of "Re d'Ys," by the French composer, Lalo, was performed for the first time in Italy. This opera was announced on the La Scala programme at Milan, but at the last rehearsals it was found that the enormous stage of that theatre was much too large for the scenic effects of the opera, which, though aiming at grand opera, was written originally for the Opéra Comique at Paris, where it was first performed. It would have been entirely out of proportion on the huge La Scala stage. The Argentina Theatre here, however, is not so large as to admit only of grand opera being performed in it, so in that respect the "Re d'Ys" had a fair chance.

In spite, however, of a good *mise-en-scène*, of an excellent orchestra, and of the best singers here, the opera is a failure, and on the first evening met with general disapproval. Madame Théodorini in the part of Margared, Signorina Calvi, and the tenor Garulli succeeded in exciting some enthusiasm by their singing, but the applause was entirely for themselves as artists, not for the opera, which was hissed and laughed at with the usual frankness of an Italian audience, which persisted in considering "Margared" and "Karmac" (the two bad characters) as parodies of Ortrud and Telramund in "Lohengrin." Much hilarity was provoked by a speaking (singing, that is) statue of a saint, who was tedious on the usual lines of such monitorial miracles. The whole opera is in three acts and five tableaux, and is founded on a Breton legend, wild and grotesque in character, the chief motive being the jealousy of Margared when she sees her sister Rozenn loved by a certain warrior named Mylio. Margared and Rozenn (the two daughters of the Re d'Ys) both love this same Mylio, but he prefers Rozenn. To revenge herself, the jealous Margared betrays the city to the enemy, Prince Karmac, by giving him the keys of the dykes, which let in the sea upon the land. In spite of the warning voice of Saint Cormorino (the statue above mentioned) the revenge is carried out. The sea rushes in and floods the city. Mylio kills Karmac in single combat, but the sea still pours in. Then Margared, filled with remorse, throws herself from a rock into the sea, the sacrifice is accepted—the waters cease to overwhelm the city, and the image of the Saint appearing calm and serene through the clouds, looks approvingly down upon everybody.

The music is condemned more than the plot. "Wagner got up à l'Académie Française" is perhaps the most pithy and crushing criticism of all I have heard.

A Rapsodia by Lalo was performed at the first Symphony Concert here as a novelty, but was appreciated no more than his opera.

At the Nazionale Theatre a comedy (by Valabregne, Ordonnau and Keroul) with the title "I Moulinard" is being performed.

The second concert of the Orchestral Society (March 15) was crowded. The Queen was present. The programme contained, among other compositions, the Symphony in G major (Haydn) and Intermezzo by Roffredo

Caetani (the second son of the Duke of Sermoneta), a young composer of promise, only seventeen years of age. The execution of this, and all the other numbers on the programme, left nothing to be desired. The young composer was complimented by the Queen, and his Intermezzo was encored.

A grand parody of Buffalo Bill's entertainment is announced at the Circo Reale. A certain popular clown named Pinta is to undertake the personification of the Colonel, who has not been popular here since the affair of the wager on taming the horses of a well-known Roman duke.

At Naples, in the Bellini Theatre, Gluck's "Armida" is being performed to crowded houses. The scene of the enchanted wood is received with immense enthusiasm, as are also the dances in the third act, the prelude and the beautiful chorus in the first act. In consequence of the real success obtained by "Armida," the performances will be continued, it is expected, for some time.

The Campanari quartett (Milan) has been most favourably received at Turin in a concert at the Artists' Club (March 14). The theatre Regio in that city will close its season on the 16th inst. with "Loreley" and the ballet "Day Sin."

FOREIGN NOTES.

The two new works of Professor Albert Becker, a Funeral March, with chorus, on the death of the Emperor Frederick, and an oratorio, "Selig aus Gnade," were performed in the Garrison Church at Berlin on the 7th inst. The oratorio (which includes Chorales to be sung by the congregation along with the choir, after the fashion of Bach's "Passion-Music") is very warmly praised by Herr Lessmann, who expresses a hope that it may be used in place of some of the selections from oratorios too often resorted to for use in churches. The experiment of using the voices of the congregation is said to have been entirely successful in at least three out of four chorales. As the work was (very properly) published before performance, it may be supposed that many of the congregation took the opportunity to learn their parts beforehand.

A report having been spread abroad by some persons eager to avail themselves of any pretext to disparage Richard Wagner, that notwithstanding his well-known philippic against the Jews he was himself of Semitic descent, some enthusiastic Wagnerites set to work to examine all the registers of the churches at Leipzig and elsewhere which could throw light on the matter, and have now ascertained that Wagner himself, all his brothers and sisters, his parents and grandparents were either baptized according to the Lutheran form or described themselves in the registers as being of that persuasion: and thus a controversy may be regarded as settled, which ought never to have been started.

A Bach-society is at last going to be founded in Vienna, if Dr. Franz Marschner and his coadjutors can bring it to pass. Hitherto the works of the great Leipzig cantor have only come to a hearing in Vienna either by performances in private, or through occasional performances at long intervals, and after much trouble in preparation. Brahms, during his residence in Vienna, was most active in the cause, but his efforts, until now, do not seem to have produced much effect. It is to be hoped that his successors will be more fortunate.

The nineteenth Gewandhaus Concert at Leipzig was distinguished by the production of three new works—new, at least, in that town: Grieg's cantata, "Olaf Trygvason;" Moritz Moszkowski's new suite for orchestra; and a "Prayer" for chorus and orchestra by Julius Röntgen. Of the three, Grieg's work would appear to be the most artistically interesting; but the suite, which is of an extremely light and lively character, obtained the greatest popular success.

At the Opera House of Prague, having finished with the Wagner cycle, they propose to revive Rubinstein's "Die Kinder der Haide," the earliest of Rubinstein's operas which was played outside Russia, it having been brought out at Vienna in 1861. What is there about Prague which makes it a place of such remarkable musical enterprise?

The twelfth and last part of the "Dizionario Universale dei Musicisti," by Carlo Schmidl, has just been published; it includes an appendix with corrections and supplementary names; the work forms altogether a large volume of 550 pp. Among the modern artists mentioned are Cotogni, Gayarre, Alberto Franchetti, and Mmes. Virginia and Carolina Ferni.

Herr Friedrich Gernsheim has been appointed conductor of the Stern'sche Gesangverein at Berlin, in place of Prof. Ernst Rudorff. Out of 145 votes thirty-four were cast for Julius Stockhausen, who had, however, previously declared that he would not be a candidate.

The last new operetta produced in Paris is that at the Folies-Dramatiques, entitled "L'Enf Rouge," libretto by MM. Busnach and Van Loo, with music by M. Edmond Audran; but the work does not seem likely to renew the success of "Olivette" and "La Mascotte."

CONCERTS.

LONDON AND SUBURBAN.

Of the three novelties heard at the first Philharmonic Concert on the 13th two were considerably over a century old. One was a pleasing suite for orchestra arranged by Mr. Cowen from the dance music in Gretry's *ballet-héroïque*, "Céphale et Procris," and consisting of six numbers, all remarkable for clearness, melodic grace, and an absence of harmonic and orchestral colour far from grateful to modern ears: the other, a fine air from J. S. Bach's dramatic chamber cantata, "The Strife between Phœbus and Pan," composed in 1731, was sung in (by no means pure) French by the famous Belgian baritone, Mr. Blauwert, who failed to quite adapt his intonation to our high pitch, and whose declamatory style was heard to far greater advantage in Wotan's "Farewell to Brunhilde," from Wagner's "Walküre," which formed his second solo. The third novelty was a fantasia for pianoforte and orchestra by Mr. Charles Widor, consisting of an opening adagio, an allegro, and a repetition, with modifications, of the former. The adagio made an excellent impression—not, however, confirmed by the succeeding allegro, which, on a first hearing, and in the absence of a "programme," struck one as noisy and eccentric—at times even vulgar. The composer conducted a very fine performance of his work, in which the solo part was played by M. Philipp, who is distinguished chiefly—as far as may be gathered from a single performance—by extreme variety of touch and executive facility. The remainder of the programme included Dr. Mackenzie's "Twelfth Night" overture, an excellent and musicianly transcription in tone of the fanciful humours of the play; the "Scotch Symphony of Mendelssohn," and Weber's overture, "Ruler of the Spirits." These latter works—the Symphony especially—received very fine interpretations at the hands of Mr. Cowen and his splendid band; and the large and brilliant audience showed plainly their appreciation of the auspicious way in which the season opened.

But for the presence of Dr. Joachim we should have been tempted to call last Saturday's Crystal Palace Concert an "off" afternoon, though to say truth, not many "grand" occasions draw a larger audience, for the concert-room, downstairs more especially, was quite crowded. The great violinist chose to appear, with M. Ernest Gillet (a 'cellist worthy of the honour) in Brahms' Double Concerto for violin, 'cello, and orchestra (Op. 102). We cannot say we like the work any better on renewing acquaintance with it. It would be unjust to call it unworthy of the composer, but it certainly cannot rank among his great or his genial works. The solo instruments are treated with an austerity which would almost make one imagine that the composer grudged every bar he had to write for them. Not that there is not plenty for them to do, but that it is all so little calculated either to display the performer or to interest the listener in his performance. It is not in this temper that the great concertos have been, or can be, written. All Brahms' great concerted works suffer more or less from this defect; his piano con-

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certos are by no means good vehicles for the exhibition of the piano, nor is his violin concerto an attractive piece for the violin. The reception of the Concerto was not at all enthusiastic, and we cannot help regretting that Dr. Joachim should not have chosen something more interesting. The enthusiasm was only forthcoming after the performance of Bach's Chaconne, which need only be mentioned. The other instrumental pieces were Haydn's Symphony in E flat (No. 10 of the Solomon set), a work which we fancy has not been played at the Palace for very many years, and Tchaikowsky's "Capriccio Italien," very little like anything ever written by an Italian, but a very clever, brilliant, and effective piece for all that, though marred here and there by a little of that tendency to vulgarity and to noisy orchestration which too often injures the effect of the Russian composer's work. Mr. Manns, who did not observe the repeats in the Haydn Symphony, secured excellent performances of all the orchestral items. The vocalist was Miss Alice Whitacre, who was not altogether happy in her choice of pieces, for Mozart's "Non paventar" is somewhat beyond her powers, and Dvůřák's songs are not suited to her style. In other music Miss Whitacre would probably be heard to much greater advantage.

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The last item of Saturday's programme at the Popular Concert comes first in point of interest. It was Grieg's Violin and Piano Sonata in C minor, played with all the free and fresh charm that perfect appreciation could lend to it by Madame Backer Grøndahl and Madame Neruda. This Sonata is one of the happiest inspirations of idealised national music in existence; if it is something more than this time only can show. Madame Neruda was accompanied by Miss Olga Neruda in her solo; but, though both soloist and accompanist did their work well, we cannot but regret that they were not heard in a less scholastic work than Vitali's Chaconne. Madame Grøndahl chose to be heard in slight and familiar pieces, in her rendering of which there was nothing remarkable; to wit Schumann's Novelette, No. 1, Chopin's Prelude in D flat, and Mendelssohn's Study in B flat minor, the last two of which were played rather below the average speed. Mrs. Henschel sang, to Mr. Frantzen's accompaniments, as perfectly as ever. Both pianist and singer accepted encores in the legitimate and old-fashioned manner by repeating the composition redemanded. If this practice became usual we should probably soon hear the last of the much-abused "encore nuisance." The old and tried quartet party of the season (Madame Neruda, M.M. Ries, Straus and Piatti) opened the concert with Schumann in A minor.

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A very fine performance of Schubert's Quartet in C, op. 163, opened last Monday's Popular Concert. It was played by M.M. Joachim, Ries, Gibson, Whitehouse, and Piatti, who once more revealed those divine beauties which make the quintet stand out pre-eminent even among the works of this most inspired of musicians. Adding Madame Backer Grøndahl, and subtracting Mr. Whitehouse, the same body of performers is to be credited with an excellent interpretation of a Quintet in B flat, Op. 5, by Sgambati, then played for the first time here. The first movement is interesting and well written, if lacking marked individuality and showing traces of the influence of Brahms or Schumann. This is not wonderful, however, in an op. 5. The second movement, barcarolle-like in character, is full of life and brightness, but the third is the most imaginative, as the last is the most elaborate movement of the work. The pianist was Madame Backer Grøndahl, who chose as her solo Chopin's Fantasia in F minor. The lady's performance of this, admirable as it was, was a thought too restrained—as though she were afraid to abandon herself to its inspiration in the presence of a "Pop" audience. The said audience, however, were delighted, and insisted upon hearing her again. Their insistence was well rewarded, for Madame Backer Grøndahl gave them a superb reading of Schumann's "Nachtstücke." Miss Liza Lehmann was the vocalist, and sang songs by Greene and Somervell as delightfully as ever.

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On Tuesday evening last Mr. Marmaduke M. Barton gave a pianoforte recital, by kind permission of Mr. John Pettie, R.A., in the spacious studio of "The Lothians," Fitzjohn's Avenue, Hampstead. The programme included works by Schumann, Chopin, Brahms, and Liszt, the second part in Schumann's Andante and Variations for two pianofortes (Op. 46) being sustained by Mr. Hamish McCunn. Mr. Barton's most successful efforts were Brahms' Variations and Fugue on a theme by Handel (Op. 24), Liszt's Sonnetto del Petrarca, and Rhapsodie (No. 12), but the audience of invited guests, it was manifest, derived considerable satisfaction from the whole recital.

Miss Anna Russell, the vocalist of the evening, greatly pleased by the charm and simplicity with which she sang Brahms' "Sandmännchen," Schubert's "Who is Sylvia?" and other songs, two being from the pen of the concert-giver. With regard to Mr. Marmaduke Barton's playing two remarks may safely be hazarded. In the first place the poetic idea is always his chief aim, and, secondly, his technique, though not always perfect in itself, is very generally the vehicle of a true and artistic conception.

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At Princes' Hall on Wednesday Miss Florence May gave an evening concert, assisted by Herr Gompertz (violin) and Mr. E. Howell (violoncello), the three artists being associated in an excellent rendering of Mendelssohn's trio in C minor, which headed the programme. The most important event of the evening was the concert-giver's splendid performance of Brahms' difficult and clever variations on a theme by Paganini. Though the lady was evidently note-perfect, she very wisely, we might say kindly, had the music before her, thereby sparing her auditors the painful apprehension of a possible slip of memory which in so exacting a work would have been only human and quite forgivable. In Brahms' Sonata in G major for violin and piano the beauties of the work were fully manifested, Herr Gompertz's 'singing' tone being especially remarkable in the Adagio. After Mr. Howell's fine playing of a characteristic Sonata for cello and piano by Marcello, Miss May brought the concert to a close with piano solos, among which were six short waltzes of her own composition, chiefly distinguished by their unconventional and very graceful melodies and their Brahms-like style.

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On the evening of Thursday of last week a pianoforte recital of considerable interest was given by Mr. Willem Coenen in Princes' Hall. Mr. Coenen's abilities long ago won him so worthy a place amongst his contemporaries that it is scarcely necessary to expatiate at any length upon the merits displayed on the occasion in question. The principal items in Mr. Coenen's programme were Mendelssohn's Prelude and Fugue in E minor, and Beethoven's "Waldstein" Sonata. Of these excellent readings were given, marked not less by executive skill than by high intelligence of conception. The minor pieces were selected from the works of Rubinstein, Chopin, Liszt, and the concert-giver.

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It is established by a general consensus of critical opinion that amateur operatic performances are things to be shunned by those who are fond of music. A happy exception to the rule was shown in the performances of the "Pirates of Penzance," which were given at the Meistersingers' Club on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of last week. Here there was no need to lower the standard of criticism, and the evil-minded critics who came to scoff remained to praise. The chorus and orchestra were admirable, and would have done credit to almost any London theatre. For this Mr. Norfolk Megone, the conductor, and Mr. W. T. Hemsley, the stage-manager, were, of course, accountable, although the obviously good material upon which they worked so skilfully and well must not be forgotten. For the precision and spirit which marked the orchestra and the chorus Mr. Megone deserves the highest praise; but Mr. Hemsley is not less to be applauded for the admirable grouping and the entire absence of that woodenness of movement which usually marks the amateur chorus. The principals were little behind; Miss Nora Girtton looked charming as Mabel, and Mrs. Graham Coles, as Ruth, sang and acted intelligently; the beautiful voice of Mr. T. W. Page (Frederic) commended him to the graces of the audience, and Mr. Fred Stanley was sufficiently vivacious as the Major-General. The other parts were distributed with satisfactory effect amongst Mr. Standen Triggs (The Pirate King), Mr. Gordon Heller (Samuel), and Mr. John Easter (Sergeant of Police).

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A "new and original comedy opera" entitled "Guinevere; or, Love Laughs at Law," music by Dr. H. T. Pringuer, Mus. Doc., was produced at the Kilburn Town Hall on Wednesday, the 19th inst., and achieved an undeniable and well-deserved success. The libretto is by Mr. Stanley Stevens, who has selected for his story a pleasant skit dealing with the tendency of the present age to submit everything to the ordeal of examination; and places the action of his piece at the Court of a certain King Littlego, where everything is decided by competitive examination, even to the appointment of a minor Court functionary, while the hand of the Princess herself is put up for public competition. Much is the trouble and many the complications which arise in consequence, but all ends happily; the heroine is united to the man of her choice, a

wandering prince, and the population finally discard exams. in disgust for ever and a day. Dr. Pringuer has written very bright and sparkling music, although decidedly light in character, as in fact befits the subject. The accompaniments, at present arranged only for harmonium and piano-forte, are well constructed and clever, but require the help of an orchestra to do them full justice. The most successful numbers in the opera were a choral march in Act I., which was loudly redemanded, a quaint weeping chorus in a minor key (Act II.), and a song by the chief examiner (Mr. Henry Baker), also in Act II. Miss Kate Johnstone won special distinction by her refined and artistic singing and acting as Princess Guinevere. Mr. Henry Body sang with much taste as the lover, Prince Lionel. Mr. Henry Baker displayed a good deal of unforced humour as the Chief Examiner, and both in his singing and acting showed that he had caught the true comical spirit. This gentleman was also responsible for the stage management, which he carried out with much skill and knowledge of dramatic effect. Miss Hannah Jones, as Selina, a lady student, delighted everybody, and both acted and sang with remarkable vivacity and spirit. The minor characters received full justice from the competent hands in which they were placed. At the fall of the curtain author and composer were unanimously called for and received a meed of unstinted applause.

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It is pleasing to know that there is at least one institution—namely, the Paddington Workhouse—in which, thanks to the broad views of the guardians and the kind assistance of sympathetic and artistic friends, the recreation of its inmates is amply provided for. The last fortnightly entertainment of the twenty-fourth annual series was given on Tuesday last, when the excellence of the programme, under the direction of Mr. W. A. Jewson, was higher than usual at social gatherings of this nature. It is not necessary under the circumstances to enumerate any individual for special praise. Amongst those who kindly gave their services were Lady Colin Campbell, Madame Adeline Grahame, and Mr. J. F. Thornthwaite, vocalists; Lady Randolph Churchill, Miss E. Bendon, and Mr. St. John Robinson, instrumentalists; and Mr. John Kirwan, Mr. A. Mayer, and Miss Gladys Lee each gave recitations. Nor must we forget to mention the small but efficient orchestra led by Mr. W. A. Jewson, which created a favourable impression by their spirited rendering of several popular pieces. At the close of the evening's performance a hearty vote of thanks was proposed by Dr. Felce, the medical officer to the organiser of the entertainment, which was responded to in a few appropriate words.

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The Portman Academy of Music was fortunate in having a crowded assemblage at the anniversary concert at the Portman Rooms on the 13th inst., but the audience, though large, was decidedly cold and very sparing of its applause. The orchestra of the Institution was joined on this occasion by that of the Amateur Philharmonic Society, and the combined bands played several times during the evening, but those responsible for the choice of music had evidently over-estimated the powers of the orchestra, for a less ambitious selection of music would have been wiser. The Entr'acte "Mariposa" (E. Diaz) went well, and was well received, but the less said about the other orchestral items the better. Miss Clinton Fynes was recalled for a careful and scholarly rendering of Mendelssohn's pianoforte concerto (No. 1), and her pupil, Miss Constance Stuart, received the same compliment for her spirited and musicianly execution of the Rondo from the E flat sonata of Beethoven. A lady whose name was not given sang Tosti's "Venetian Song" with much sweetness and artistic feeling, and Mr. Mortimer Adye, also a pupil of Miss Fynes', gave pianoforte solos by Schumann and Cecil Goodall with considerable success.

* *

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Pertwee, assisted by Mr. Algernon Lindo and Mr. Martyn Van Lennep, gave a dramatic and vocal recital at Steinway Hall on Wednesday afternoon last of a description more popular a few years ago than now. Mr. Pertwee, who has a rich-toned voice enhanced by elocutionary skill, recited several popular pieces, amongst them Byron's "Eve of Waterloo" and "At the Opera," by Lytton, with much dramatic perception, and Mrs. Pertwee's flexible soprano voice was effectively heard in songs by Cooke, Massenet, and Rubinstein. Mr. Van Lennep displayed much artistic feeling in Lassen's "Allerseden" and in a song from his own pen, entitled "So do I love thee," being encored after the latter, and Mr. Algernon Lindo's neat executive abilities were advantageously shown in Benedict's "Fantasia on Irish Airs."

St. Patrick's Day, which fell on Monday, missed thereby its due celebration, the usual Irish concert taking place at St. James's Hall on Saturday evening. The many sons and daughters of Erin who then attended appeared, however, to appreciate the plentiful feast provided none the less. Criticism is, of course, superfluous; it is sufficient to say that Madame Antoinette Sterling, Miss Macintyre, Miss Liza Lehmann, Miss Helen Measom, Miss Florence Hoskins, Mr. Dalgety Henderson, Mr. J. Robertson, Mr. Walter Clifford, and Mr. Plunket Greene were responsible for the execution of a programme which contained all the most popular examples of Irish minstrelsy; Mr. Greene, however, must be accorded recognition more distinct, for the humour and beauty of voice with which he interpreted his songs secured for him the lion's share of applause.

* *

An excellent entertainment was given on Tuesday last to the children and friends of the Foundling Hospital. Miss Rosa Leo had generously undertaken the provision of the programme, to which she contributed not the least interesting items. To her aid there also came such popular artists as Mrs. Bramwell-Davis, Mr. Templar Saxe, Miss Amy Roselle, and Mr. H. H. Morell, whose songs and recitations were all deservedly appreciated. Mr. Arthur Dacre recited away whatever pathos once attached to the memory of Mary, Queen of Scots; and Miss Leo and Mr. Saxe gave an admirable performance of Mr. Wilfred Bendall's bright operetta, "Quid pro Quo."

* *

On the afternoon of Thursday last an interesting concert was given in St. James's Hall on behalf of the Homes and Shelters for Inebriate Women and Girls. An excellent programme had been arranged by Mr. William Nicholl, with the result that a large audience came together to the support of this most deserving charity. Miss Margaret Hall, Miss Eleanor Rees, Mr. Arthur Oswald, Mr. Richard Gompertz, and Mr. A. H. Brousil were chiefly responsible for the success of the concert, for all of these sang—as did Mr. Nicholl also—in their best style. Mr. Beerbohm Tree, with equal generosity, recited with great effect Buchanan's "Fra Giacomo."

* *

On Tuesday evening the Students of the Kensington School of Music gave a concert. The vocalists were promising, but their efforts were marred by nervousness, and the same may be said of the pianists, with the exceptions of Miss Shearman and Miss Winnie Gill; the former young lady gave a very creditable rendering of Chopin's Rondo, Op. 1, and the latter, a mere child, displayed much aptitude and musical instinct in a waltz by Beethoven.

* *

An Irish concert was also given on Monday night at the Bermondsey Town Hall by the Popular Musical Union. The chief vocalists were Mrs. H. Machin, Madame Carlotta Ide, and Mr. Gabriel Thorp, whose efforts were well applauded, while the band of the Grenadier Guards played various selections with their accustomed spirit.

PROVINCIAL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.)

LEEDS, MARCH 18.—The 6th and last of the Subscription Concerts took place on Wednesday last, the 12th March. The programme was of chamber music, its principal features being the second of the "Rasoumowski" quartets (in E minor), very finely played by Messrs. Joachim, Betjemann, Gibson, and Piatti; and Mozart's Quintet in G minor (No. 6), no less ably rendered by the same artists, with the addition of Mr. Eckener, a local violinist and former pupil of Dr. Joachim, as second viola. Dr. Joachim played one of his well known solos, Bach's Sarabande and Bourrée in B minor; Mr. Piatti, the set of variations by Christopher Simpson which he has recently revived, and Miss Fanny Davies, Schumann's "Carnaval," of which she gave a very artistic rendering, entering most thoroughly into its spirit of alternate humour and sentiment. Mme. Bertha Moore, though an apology was made on her behalf on the score of indisposition, won the unanimous approval of her audience by her refined singing of a serenade by Raff (a song having some slight resemblance to Wolfram's address to the "Star of Eve"), Brahms' delicious little "Wiegenlied," Henschel's "Spinning Wheel," and Chopin's singular "Coquette." Mr. Alfred Broughton accompanied the vocal solos with much delicacy and care. The audience was large and enthusiastic, and

altogether the concert formed a most satisfactory conclusion to a season which, from an artistic point of view at least, has been most successful. The financial aspect of the question is, on the other hand, less satisfactory, and it is probable a contribution will have to be levied from the guarantors to meet the deficit. And yet Leeds, a town of over 300,000 inhabitants, with no other concerts occupying the same ground, considers itself "musical!"

The fifth of Mr. Edgar Haddock's "Musical Evenings" took place on the 4th March, when Mr. Ralph Stuart was pianist, and gave an intelligent rendering of Liszt's Polonaise in E and Chopin's Ballade in G minor. Mr. Haddock played Wieniawski's well-known "Legende" and a Paganini Capriccio, and Mme. Georgina Burns and Mr. Archibald Ramsden, jun., sang several songs.

MANCHESTER.—The series of pianoforte recitals given by Sir Charles Hallé in connection with the Gentlemen's Concerts is rapidly drawing to a close. The seventh and penultimate recital was given on the 10th inst., the programme being selected from well-known works by Schumann, Mendelssohn, Heller, Doehler, Thalberg, and Chopin. It is needless to say how sympathetically the veteran pianist interpreted the works of these friends and associates of his earlier years. On the 13th inst. Sir Charles Hallé brought the thirty-second season of his concert to a successful close. Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto and Thalberg's "Home sweet home" were the solos selected. The former work was chosen by Sir Charles when making his first appearance in Manchester at the Gentlemen's Concerts in 1848 and he made his *début* with the same piece at Covent Garden Concerts in the same year. On the present occasion the concerto was given for the sixteenth time at these concerts, and received with great enthusiasm. In response to a recall after the Thalberg *morceau* Sir Charles played Raff's "La Fileuse" with the utmost possible delicacy and finish. Miss Macintyre was the vocalist, and gave 'Elsa's dream' (Wagner), "Mia Picciarella" (Gomez), and "Lehn'deine Wang" (Lassen) with great success. Haydn's 49th Symphony in D minor proved a delightful work, thoroughly characteristic of its author. Whilst abounding with playful good humour and masterly development, there is an absence of that overworking which we find in many modern works where, though more

is attempted, less is achieved. The overtures were "Der Barbier von Bagdad," by Peter Cornelius, a disciple of Wagner, and Mendelssohn's "A calm sea and a prosperous voyage," which suitably concluded the concert. The hall was crowded in every part by an immense audience, who cheered Sir Charles again and again, thus clearly demonstrating to him that he carries away the hearty good wishes of the Manchester public, and that his labours for the appreciation of high class music have not been in vain.

BIRMINGHAM, MARCH 17.—Madame Backer-Gröndahl was heard for the first time here, at Mr. Stockley's third orchestral subscription concert, in Grieg's Pianoforte Concerto in A minor, op. 16, with which the London musical public have been made familiar, but which has not been given in the Midlands before. This magnificent work, so characteristic of Northern climes, is a true tone-picture. The performance caused quite a *furor*, and the artist was twice recalled to the platform. In the second part she played Chopin's difficult Fantasia in F with equally marked success. Mr. Stockley's orchestra shows unmistakable signs of advance, and may now be considered as one of the principal orchestras in the provinces. Miss Fanny Moody and Signor Foli were the vocalists. The former fairly "carried away" the audience: the latter appeared to have taken a new lease of life, his voice sounded so fresh and vigorous. The last of the Birmingham and Midland Musical Guild's Saturday Popular Concerts of the present series was given on the 15th inst. The principal novelty was the first appearance of the Edgbaston Philharmonic Orchestral Society, trained and conducted by Mr. S. S. Stratton. With the exception of one or two professional instrumentalists, the Society on this occasion was composed entirely of amateurs. We are glad to be able to state that their performance was distinguished by excellent *ensemble* and due regard to light and shade.

BRISTOL.—Sir Chas. Hallé attended a special meeting of the Bristol Musical Festival Society Committee, which has just been held. Matters relating to the approaching Festival were discussed, and it was decided to include "Judith," "The Redemption," "The Golden Legend," and "The Messiah" in the programme. Sir Charles Hallé was afterwards entertained at dinner by members of the committee. Replying to some complimentary remarks the veteran knight gave an interesting description of

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his starting his Manchester band and the work it had and was a accomplishing. He expressed his desire to see a good local orchestral band in every large town in England. At the annual meeting of the Bristol Orpheus Glee Society on Monday evening it was decided to give a concert at St. James's Hall, London, at the end of April. The invitation to the Bristol Choral Society to take part in a performance of "St. Paul" at the Crystal Palace in June has been accepted, and arrangements are being made for a special train for the conveyance of members.

CHELTEMHAM.—The presentation of certificates gained at the Trinity College (local centre) examinations in December took place at the Handel Hall on Monday, the Mayor (Col. Thoyts) presiding, and Professor E. H. Turpin, Mus. Doc., addressing the recipients and friends. The certificates were presented by Mrs. Thoyts. In the evening a *conversazione* was held, at which many interesting and valuable MSS. and scores, lent by Messrs. Novello and Co., Mr. J. A. Matthews, Dr. W. H. Longhurst, and others, were on view. Dr. Turpin delivered a lecture on the Orchestra, during which he spoke highly of the efforts of Mr. J. A. Matthews to provide musical treats. The Rev. G. Gardner (chairman) also spoke in eulogistic terms of Mr. Matthews and of the lecturer. During the evening several pieces of music were capably played by the orchestra of the Musical Festival Society.

BRIGHTON.—Last Saturday the visitors at Connaught House, Montpelier-road, enjoyed an exceptional musical treat in listening to a private recital of that renowned guitarist, Madame Sidney Pratten, who rendered with her customary charm and artistic skill works by Niski, Giuliani, Schulz, &c., and some delightful *morceaux* from her own pen. Such an artist as Madame Pratten should be heard more often in public, as the guitar in her hands is indeed a most pleasing instrument. Miss Falcke delighted the audience with her charming songs.

On Wednesday Mr. F. d'Alquen, assisted by his pupils, gave an "Après-midi Musicale." Mr. d'Alquen is a violoncellist of exceptional ability, possessing also a rich and powerful bass voice, and his contributions to the programme were well received. Together with his talented daughter, Miss d'Alquen, he played Mendelssohn's "Tema con Variazioni" (piano and 'cello) and "Trois morceaux" (Op. II.), by Rubinstein, in which both executants were very successful, and fully convinced the audience of their great artistic abilities. Miss d'Alquen's exquisite rendering of Dr. Arne's "Introduction and Gavotte" (arranged by E. H. Thorne) was enthusiastically applauded. The vocal items were pleasingly rendered by Miss Williams, Miss Davis, and Mr. d'Alquen.

BATH.—The last classical programme set before his appreciative audience at the Pump Room by Mr. Van Praag included Haydn's "The Queen" Symphony, Cherubini's "Lodoiska" Overture, and Moskowski's Suite, "From Foreign Parts." These, and indeed all the other items, were played with the precision and intelligence customary at Mr. Van Praag's concerts.

CONTENTS.

Facts and Comments	223	Lenten Music. By F. G. Webb. 232
Benefit Performances	225	Notes
The Worship of Handel	226	The Royal Institute of Painters
Unpublished Letters of Beet-		in Water Colours
hoven. Collected by La Mara. 227		Some New English Works
Royal Institution	228	The Royal Society of Painter
The Late Dr. Wylde	229	Etchers
"Miss Cinderella" and First		Notes from Rome
Pieces	229	Foreign Notes
The Dramatists	230	Concerts
Notes and News	231	Provincial



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